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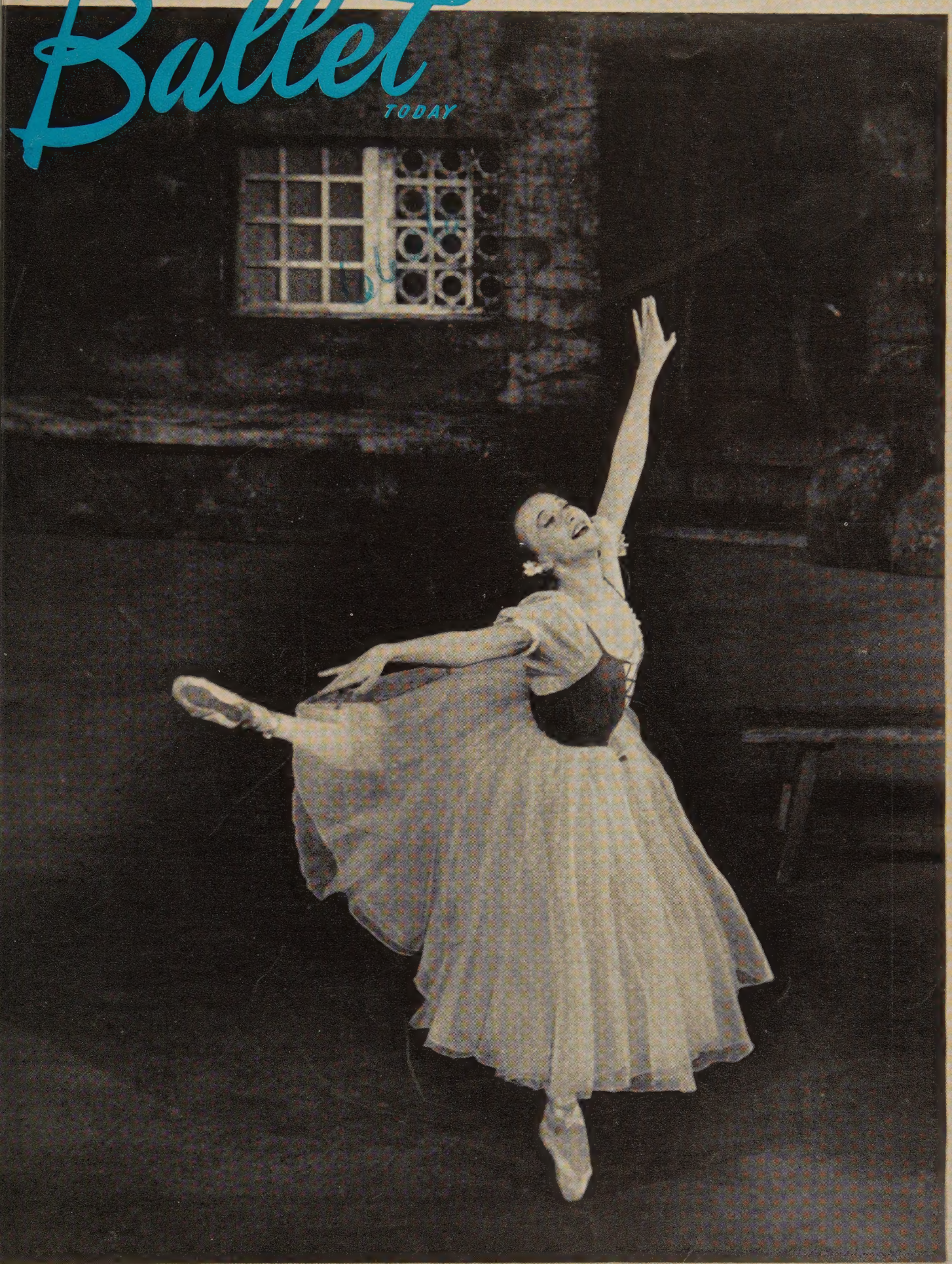

GALINA ULANOVA in GISELLE

One of eight beautiful studies by Houston Rogers in our *Photographing the Ballet* series.

No. 1 VOL. 12

In This Issue

Backstage 2

Television Ballet *by Helen Ross* 4

REVIEWS

London *by Fernau Hall* 5

Monte Carlo *by J. R. Farrington* .. 7

Moscow *by Ilunina* 7

Paris *by Ferdinand Reyna* 7

Munich *by Dr. Wilfried Hofmann* .. 9

New York *by Walter Sorell* 10

Chicago *by Leon L. Bram and George Jackson* 10

Photographing the Ballet, *selections from the work of Houston Rogers* 11

The career of Milorad Miskovitch .. 16

New Books *by Pigeon Crowle* 19

New Recordings *by Bedford Crowle* .. 21

Programmes for the Month 23

The Young Dancer's Page 24

Careers in Pictures:
Jeannette Minty *text by Sonia Roberts* 26

Cover Portrait
Galina Ulanova in *Giselle*

In a competition organised by Encyclopaedia Britannica *Mr. R. Burton of the Keystone Press Agency won the first award in the Portfolio Category, British Press Pictures of the Year* 1958 *with his "Cossack Dancer" seen above. The dancer is Leonid Sarafanov of the Ukrainian State Cossack Company whose appearances at the Albert Hall, London, and on Television were one of the highlights of* 1958

A LETTER FROM THE ANTIPODES

AMONGST my Christmas mail was a letter from Mrs. M. C. Taylor of New Zealand who wrote me:—

> "Never fail to realise that *Ballet Today* is a bright and necessary institution, giving independent and candid criticism and evaluation and not hesitating to say so if a new ballet is unwholesome or trivial and contrived. Both audience and artists need this because so much nastiness is nowadays mistaken for advanced art. So—from the Antipodes, to the brilliant journal and its editress—Christmas Greetings, and a Happy New Year."

Thank you, Mrs. Taylor, but running a magazine is rather like making a cake, it is a failure unless one takes care to get the right ingredients.

First you must find the right *type* of writers and critics. At first sight it would appear that there are plenty to be found but in no time at all they tend to develop along familiar channels. One encounters the "headline hunter" concerned mainly with catching the public eye and making a name for *himself* at all costs. Then there are those who come under the heading of "the rip and tear brigade"—those who tell you everything about a production is wrong but never how to put it right. The "solid" critic who knows his subject and is inspired by the highest aims, but is so often woefully, tediously dull, and the "kind" critic who praises everybody and everything—willy nilly.

In this age when nation can speak to nation by means of television and radio and it is possible to board a plane and arrive almost anywhere in a few hours, the written word still has its limitations, for only the reader can bring the words to life. A magazine therefore needs not only writers capable of assessing the true worth of any production or performance but also readers capable of analysing such opinions.

In thanking Mrs. Taylor and all the other readers who take such an encouraging interest in this magazine I would like to say this. We are inspired by the dancers who work so hard, sometimes for very little, sometimes for nothing at all; we are filled with intense admiration for all the companies and groups throughout the world who struggle on sometimes without backing or bank balances, often under very difficult conditions, seldom with any hope of making money. Knowing all their difficulties we must nevertheless try to present the opinions of the audiences they serve.

It has always been the aim of *Ballet Today* to attract to its columns men and women writers with only one purpose—to give sincere unbiased criticism, to construct not to destroy, to serve the art of ballet which they love. In this I think we can claim to have succeeded.

Our next issue will be published on 25th February, 1959.

Ballet TODAY

Backstage

HOME FOR CHRISTMAS

Having crossed the Atlantic many times during 1958 in order to fill her engagements in London and New York, Alicia Markova came home for Christmas, not to rest as one would suppose, but to prepare for the opening of that hardy much loved annual *Where the Rainbow Ends* at the New Victoria Theatre on Boxing Day. The show ran until January 17th with Markova as "the Spirit of the Lake" dancing with Jean-Pierre Alban in a ballet choreographed by Keith Lester to Tchaikovsky's Suite in G. Anton Dolin made his eighth successive appearance in the role of "St. George of England." It is forty-eight years since this production was first presented at the Savoy Theatre and countless children have been brought to see it. In turn they have grown up and brought their own children and grandchildren. In 1935 our present Queen, then Princess Elizabeth, was brought to the performance by her mother, Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. And the modern child seems to enjoy the play just as much, for how they hissed the Dragon King, clapped Markova until they could clap no more, laughed at the discomfiture of the wicked aunt and uncle, and cheered St. George.

Immediately prior to her return to England Markova had enjoyed tremendous success in a New York TV special presentation of the *Victor Borge Hour*. Forty eight hours after her arrival in England she again appeared on TV—this time with Anton Dolin in the celebrity spot of B.B.C.'s television show *What's My Line*. It did not take the panel long to guess their identity despite their assumed American intonation.

When Festival Ballet opened at the Royal Festival Hall on December 22nd Markova was in the audience to watch her own niece, Susie Kempner, make her appearance as a soldier in Act 1 of the *Nutcracker*.

In the interval I was able to have a few words with Markova and she told me that in February she will be returning to the States for another engagement, this time in Washington. Great plans are afoot for forming ballet companies in most of the major cities in America and Markova has been asked to make guest appearances.

I don't think people in Britain fully realise how much our great ballerina is loved and admired by our American cousins. The *New York Times* described her TV appearance in the Victor Borge Hour at "pure poetry of movement."

FOUR CINDERELLAS

To mark the tenth anniversary of the world première of Frederick Ashton's ballet *Cinderella* the Royal Ballet put on eleven performances with all the Company's ballerinas dancing the title role (with the exception of Rowena Jackson of course who is on tour in Australia). Margot Fonteyn and Michael Somes gave the first performance on December 23rd and two more during the season which ran to January 17th; Svetlana Beriosova also partnered by Somes danced the role four times, and David Blair partnered Nadia Nerina and Anya Linden on the two occasions they both took the lead in this ballet.

When the ballet was premièred on December 23rd, 1948, although the part was

Continued overleaf

Alicia Markova arriving with Christmas presents. The toy monkey, seen in her arms, is for her two-year-old nephew (*see* Home for Christmas)

Two Cinderellas at rehearsal. Margot Fonteyn and Svetlana Beriosova (*see* Four Cinderellas).
Below: Violetta Elvin married

Stagioni (*see* Success Story).

Photo: Enar Merkel Rydberg

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BACKSTAGE—*Continued*

originally intended for Margot Fonteyn she was unable to dance owing to a strained ligament, and it was therefore Moira Shearer who created the role of Cinderella, the first three-act work written for Sadler's Wells Ballet and also Ashton's first full-length ballet.

For the first time in the history of the ballet the Ugly Sisters were girls, Moyra Fraser returned to the Company as a guest artist to dance the role created by Robert Helpmann, and Margaret Hill danced the part usually taken by Frederick Ashton.

In the New Year Margot Fonteyn and Michael Somes danced the pas de deux from *Ondine* at Monte Carlo. They were originally to have given a new Macmillan ballet but it was not ready in time. In March they will both be joining the Royal Ballet during the seasons in Wellington and Christchurch. In December I heard from New Zealand that already it was impossible to book a seat for a Fonteyn performance.

There are to be two revivals at Covent Garden during March—John Cranko's *Harlequin in April* and Kenneth Macmillan's *Danses Concertantes*. Frederick Ashton's *La Valse* will also be performed for the first time in England during that month.

SUCCESS STORY

In November Jack Carter was invited to do a ballet for the Royal Swedish Ballet in Stockholm. He put on *Stagioni*, which he has previously had performed in London, Paris and Amsterdam (costumes and decor by Norman McDowell, music by Verdi). The four ballerinas were danced by Ellen Rasch, Marianne Orlando, Gunnel Lindgren and Yvonne Brosset and their partner by Caj Selling. The ballet was such a success that before Jack left Stockholm he was able to see it performed at two different theatres in two different versions—one at the Royal Opera House in full costumes and decor, and the other at a smaller theatre in practice dress and no decor (as it was put on at the Mercury Theatre London in 1952).

BALLET RAMBERT AMERICAN TOUR

Following their extensive spring tour of the English provinces Ballet Rambert will sail for America on the 3rd July, and their season at Jacob's Pillow will be (approximately) from July 15th to August 15th. Plans have not yet been finalised as at the time of going to press, but negotiations are under way and it is hoped a long tour of America and possibly Canada will follow. Prior to the arrival of the Company Madame Rambert will make several appearances on American TV. All the principal dancers will be taking part in the tour.

FESTIVALS

This year will mark the fifth anniversary of the International Dance Festival held at Nervi, and as in previous years will be held in the delightful setting of the Park Theatre. Details are not yet to hand of the performances, but I understand that some important artists have already been engaged and that the Festival will take place from July 15th to August 5th.

Another 1959 date announced is that of the Edinburgh Festival, which will be held from August 23rd to September 12th. No details of artists taking part in the ballet performances are yet available.

POPULAR FESTIVAL BALLET

In our October issue I reported that Kenneth Melville, back from Australia and taking a holiday, hoped to remain in England. It looks as if his wish will come true for he joined the Festival Ballet on their autumn tour of the provinces, dancing in *Romeo and Juliet* and Albrecht in *Giselle*. When the Company gave a charity performance in aid of the Cancer Relief Fund at Tunbridge Wells, with Anton Dolin dancing *Hymn to the Sun*, Deirdre O'Connaire and André Prokovsky in the pas de deux from *Casse Noisette*, the programme also included *Coppelia* danced by Kenneth Melville with Natalie Krassovska. Kenneth writes me that he was delighted to see the enthusiastic reception Festival Ballet receives wherever they appear "and" he adds "*despite TV*—excellent audiences."

ROLES AND SOLES

Ballet shoemakers on the whole are inclined to be like the ballerinas they serve, except that they create soles instead of roles they are both unaware of the value of publicity and modern methods of advertising. There are exceptions of course and one of the most enterprising is the firm of Anello and Davide. Not only have they occupied the back cover of *Ballet Today* every month since June 1955 (and have renewed their contract with us for the whole of 1959) but they have also for some years now published their own magazine entitled "On Your Toes." This publication is for the shoe trade only of course, but they also issue a free catalogue on request (postage and packing 6d.). Where will you find the address? On the back page of *Ballet Today* of course.

WEDDING BELLS

It has been announced that Svetlana Beriosova is to marry Masud Khan on January 23rd at Chelsea Registry Office. Mr. Khan, who is a Harley Street psychologist, is the brother of General Ayub Khan who became President of Pakistan in October. All five Royal Ballet ballerinas are now married, only one—Rowena Jackson—to a dancer (Philip Chatfield).

Little has been heard of Violetta Elvin since she left the Royal Ballet in 1956, and after such a long lapse of time it therefore came as a surprise to hear that her marriage to Dr. Ferdinando Savarese, an Italian lawyer, finally took place in London on the 2nd January at Kensington Registry Office.

Prior to her resignation from the Royal Ballet, Violetta Elvin was a regular columnist in *Ballet Today*, the only ballerina to write for any British publication whilst still dancing.

MICHAEL SOMES HONOURED

Michael Somes, principal dancer of the Royal Ballet was awarded the C.B.E. in the New Year's Honours List.

BERYL GREY

Beryl Grey is returning to Covent Garden for a season and will give her first performance in *Lac* in March.

SUNDAY BALLET CLUB

The production of four new ballets on January 11th at Wyndham's Theatre will be reviewed in our next issue.

LONDON TELEVISION BALLET —By HELEN ROSS

Wednesday November 19th—B.B.C. Television—Riverside One.

It is most gratifying that this programme very often includes excerpts from the ballet. On this particular evening Svetlana Beriosova and Brian Ashbridge performed the Grand Pas de Deux from Act III of *Sleeping Beauty*, which shows Beriosova's lovely classical style to great advantage. The dancers, for once had a large and spacious floor on which to perform but the background and lighting did not give sufficient contrast to the dancers' costumes. The most plausible choice of background, especially for a pas de deux would be a dark one against which the dancers would stand out, but for some unknown reason producers fight shy of this. The orchestral accompaniment had rather erratic tempi and managed to completely dispel all sense of excitement and climax.

Sunday November 23rd—B.B.C. Television—Giselle.

A full-length ballet on television is an auspicious event and this production featured a distinguished cast headed by Nadia Nerina and Nicolai Fadeyechev, principal dancer from Moscow's Bolshoi Ballet. The supporting cast included Lydia Sokolova, Niels Bjorn Larsen, Julia Farron, Margaret Hill, Peter Wright and an excellent corps de ballet. The music was recorded by the Royal Opera House Orchestra and conducted by Hugo Rignold. The production, unfortunately, did not attain the high standard of the performers. The story must have been incomprehensible for those viewers not acquainted with the ballet, but the excellence of the dancing must have more than compensated for this. Those acquainted with ballet must have been frustrated by some of the weak points which could have been overcome. Taking into consideration the difficulties of a production of this kind it still seems unforgivable that Act II should have been so lacking in atmosphere. At times the sets for this act were not unattractive but I found the trees in the foreground a nuisance and a distraction especially when they obscured some of the most attractive dance sequences. Hilarion's death and Myrtha's appearance from a pool were well contrived but this kind of effect (an easy accomplishment on T.V. and almost impossible in a stage production) was not used sufficiently or with much imagination. An integral point which seems to have been missed near the end of this act, was the effect of the first rays of the rising sun which portend the departure of the Wilis and the deliverance of Albrecht. Without this, the end of the ballet had no meaning and was so drawn out that I expected Giselle to appear again and drop flowers at Albrecht's feet on his long walk off, but nothing happened except the appearance of captions which was unfair to Fadeyechev who was giving such an excellent portrayal of grief and despair. Nerina gave a remarkable performance as Giselle and her mad scene came over most movingly. She could have been more joyous in the earlier part of the act but her dancing throughout was outstanding. We must be very grateful to the B.B.C. for inviting Fadeyechev to dance Albrecht. He is without doubt one of the finest male dancers of today and his characterisation, sincerity and nobility in this role was an artistic achievement of great merit. Both he and Nerina accomplished the beautiful high Bolshoi lifts in Act II with ease and grace. Margaret Hill was an authoritative and evil Queen of the Wilis. Congratulations for the excellence of the corps de ballet are no doubt due to Peter Wright who was ballet master. Costumes were by Jane Scrase Dickens, the designer was George Djurkovic and the production was by Margaret Dale.

Continued on page 6

REVIEWS

LONDON

—FERNAU HALL

WEST SIDE STORY

Like *Oklahoma* and *My Fair Lady*, *West Side Story* has reached us trailing clouds of glory in the form of rapturous reports from New York; and like them it has lived up to its advance publicity, showing such high quality that it seems set for a very long run. If you haven't booked your tickets by now, you'll have to accept a date well ahead.

In many ways *West Side Story* is the opposite of *My Fair Lady*. The latter is essentially a play by a great writer, extremely well cast and produced, and decorated with some charming lyrics: the dancing is almost negligible. *West Side Story* might almost be considered a ballet with trimmings: Jerome Robbins, who conceived the whole plan of the musical, is one of the finest American choreographers, and—as the programme states—the "entire production" is "directed and choreographed" by him. In fact some of the lyrics by Stephen Sondheim are intolerably banal: only a few (such as the witty Puerto Rican song *America* and the bitterly satirical *Gee Officer Krupke*) belong to the same world as the choreography. The music, by Leonard Bernstein, is also strangely variable in quality. There are some instrumental pieces (such as the overture) which are so noisy and flat-footed that they might belong to an English provincial pantomine, and some songs of glutinous sentimentality; on the other hand there are musical items such as the ensemble *Tonight* (in which a number of different characters sing their own lines, independently of each other) which bring us into the world of opéra comique.

Fortunately the dancing is magnificently consistent and so expressive that the defects of other parts of the show matter very little. The story of Romeo and Juliet has been admirably adapted to present-day Manhattan, the Montagus and Capulets being translated into rival gangs of juvenile delinquents. There are five items in which dancing is so prominent that they might be considered short ballets; elsewhere the movements have been so imaginatively composed by Jerome Robbins that there is no sharp break in texture when the ballets begin. As in other good American musicals since *Oklahoma*, the dance-sequences continue the action: what is new in *West Side Story* is that these sequences are so important and expressive that they carry the main weight of plot and characterisation. (Take away the speaking and singing, and *West Side Story* would hold the stage as a ballet.)

Though the prologue is danced, the artists first show the full measure of their talent in *The Dance at the Gym*. What they perform is jazz dancing—something which has grown up in the Negro dance-halls of Harlem (with distant roots in Africa) and which has been polished up by American modern dancers and choreographers like Michael Kidd and Jerome Robbins himself. A good deal of it is used—usually in a very routine manner—on television. But there is nothing routine about the jazz dancing in *West Side Story*: the patterns change with breathtaking speed and slickness, and Robbins uses the movements to express a marvellous variety of mood and character. The boys in their sneakers, tight trousers and windcheaters move with the languid grace of leopards, showing a relaxation which is regrettably rare in American ballet. Female dancing is seen at its best in *America*, sung and danced by the Puerto Rican girls. Here Chita Rivera (Anita) is outstanding as the central figure, singing well and dancing with the most fascinating Latin-American bravura.

The leaders of the two gangs—Riff of the Jets (George Chakiris) and Bernardo of the Puerto Rican Sharks (Ken le Roy) are also very fine dancers, and are seen to particularly good advantage in the "Rumble"—the fight between the gangs. Clearly Jerome Robbins has profited from study of the sword-fight in the Bolshoi *Romeo and Juliet*, and the knife-fight in *Blood Wedding*; but he gives his own individual interpretation of this theme, exploiting the sinister cat-like quality of the New York hoodlums. His only mistake is to make the killing of Bernardo (Tybalt) by Tony (Romeo) follow immediately on the killing of Riff (Mercutio) by Bernardo, at a moment when Riff is momentarily off his guard: this is so sudden that it fails to make its proper impact.

In two of the danced scenes—the fantasy-ballet *Somewhere* and the Finale—Robbins uses dancing in a very interesting way: to suggest a reconciliation of the bitter conflicts which are the theme of the work as a whole. Here he took an idea from the finale of Tudor's *Dark Elegies*, making his dancers walk two-by-two in a line curving off-stage. Unfortunately Robbins is not able to make anything like as profound an effect as Tudor, mainly because Bernstein's music—which must carry a great weight of feeling when the dancing is very subdued—is much too superficial for the occasion. Bernstein has real talent as a composer; but over and over again, in *West Side Story*, one can imagine him looking over his shoulder and wondering if the customers will get worried if he takes them too far from the music to which they are accustomed. I think he is much too cautious, for a musical which is largely danced: the fact is that, if the dancing is enthralling, and the music is dramatically right, audiences worry very little about its degree of harmonic sophistication.

Robbins, searching for artists who are very good at dancing, singing and acting and also look right for the parts, must have had great difficulty in casting the show, and on the whole he has succeeded remarkably well. But he has been unfortunate with his Romeo and Juliet: though Don McKay (Tony) and Marlys Watters (Maria) look dead right they are not in the same class as dancers and singers with the other three leading artists. In fact they have little dancing to do, which is just as well.

The settings are numerous and magnificent: Oliver Smith finds a touching poetry in such unlikely surroundings as the fenced-off spaces under a highway, and makes even fire-escapes evocative. The lighting, by Joe Davis, is correspondingly flexible and imaginative, making the most of the rapidly changing dramatic situation. I hope all those concerned with the staging of English ballet will visit *West Side Story*, for in spite of its deficiencies it brings together all the elements of the theatre in a fresh and stimulating manner.

THE ROYAL BALLET

LA FETE ÉTRANGE—REVIVAL AT COVENT GARDEN

Of all Andrée Howard's ballets, *La Fête Étrange* is the most popular and the most widely performed. All the same, I wish the Royal Ballet had instead revived *Lady into Fox*, which to me is by far the finest thing Andrée Howard has ever done—and could easily eclipse *La Fête Étrange* in popularity, if the public had a chance to see it. In *Lady into Fox* the central figure is deliciously unpredictable and contrary—by turns bewitching and vicious. There is nothing of this fascination in the heroine of *La Fête Étrange*: Anne Heaton is able to make quite a lot of her anguish at seeing her wedding broken up, but essentially the character is a neutral figure performing enchainements which are all too familiar in Andrée Howard's ballets. The other-wordly magic of the heroine of the novel *Le Grand Meaulnes* (on which the ballet is based) is lacking; instead, there is an evocation of a pale romantic atmosphere which is quite pleasant in its own way but not strong enough to sustain so long a ballet.

Beriosova dances the heroine in the Covent Garden revival. She is as noble and elegant as usual, bringing to the role the assured stage presence which is characteristic of the great Russian tradition. In a way her aloofness suits the choreography, helping it to establish a romantic atmosphere. But it is too generalized an aloofness: I could wish her to characterise the role more precisely, making the bride into a very young and impetuous girl. And she needs to focus her attention more on the boy with whom she becomes entangled. By such means she can learn to project her feelings more forcefully to the audience.

Pirmin Trecu dances his old part of the boy with fine intensity, putting everything possible into the rather neutral steps; and Ronald Hynd acts with splendid dignity the role of the Bridegroom.

What chiefly suffers in this translation of *La Fête Étrange* to the large stage at the Garden is the décor. I am sure that if Sophie Fedorovitch had been alive she would have insisted on redesigning the backcloth, which is too pale and formless when blown up to such a scale. (It was originally intended for the Arts Theatre, and looked right there.)

ONDINE REVISITED

I was delighted to have a second chance to see *Ondine*, a month after the opening, for no-one can take in all the details of a three-act ballet at one visit. As one might have expected, the biggest change is to be seen in Margot Fonteyn's performance: she has added a great many subtle nuances of phrasing, and does even more than before to introduce changing moods into her interpretation (within the narrow limits set by the choreography). What I did not realize before is that all the music Henze has written for her is more attuned to Ashton's style of choreography than the rest of the music: this is hard on the others, but it does give Margot Fonteyn a chance to deploy her musicality and display her exquisite line. But over and over again she is frustrated by the flabbiness of the musico-dramatic structure. The sequence of pas de deux in the "Mysterious Forest" scene of Act I is quite typical. This begins well with a lyrical pas de deux in slow tempo, reminding one to some extent of the pas de deux in *Symphonic Variations*. Then there is a short quick pas de deux—followed by another slow, lyrical pas de deux which adds nothing to the first. The Hermit crosses the stage—and the lovers continue for a short time with yet *another* slow lyrical pas de deux. This makes no kind of sense, dramatically or musically. The fact is that Ashton has no real feeling for dramatic choreography: characteristically, he writes of the librettos of the great dramatic ballets of the past that they "supplemented choreographic expression." (Symposium on "The Subject Matter of Ballet" in this year's *Ballet Annual*.) This idea that choreographic expression

—*Continued overleaf*

THE ROYAL BALLET — *Continued from previous page*

is independent of the story is just tolerable in a one-act ballet, but it is a fatal obstacle to the construction of a satisfactory multi-act ballet.

Watching such fine artists as Maryon Lane, Merle Park, Georgina Parkinson and Antoinette Sibley struggling against heavy odds in the divertissement, I regretted more than ever that Ashton did not provide them with solo parts. Never before has the Royal Ballet been so rich in promising young danseuses: what they need is to get their teeth into exacting roles so that they can continue to mature artistically.

A number of faults of production, unnoticed at the first viewing of the ballet, are clearly visible at a second viewing. It is wrong that the Ondines should have to rush through a small opening in the gauze towards the end of the "Mysterious Forest" scene: they make it flap, and this destroys the mysterious atmosphere completely. Berta, a noblewoman, should not wear her hair loose like an Ondine. Margot Fonteyn should not appear behind a painting in Act III, in a very obvious way—when she is due to appear later in a much more mysterious way, supported by unseen hands. In justice to the production I must add that this latter scene has been much improved: the lighting is now very carefully adjusted so that Ondine seems to float on the waves

MAM'ZELLE ANGOT

The role of Mam'zelle Angot is not one of Massine's most rounded and inventive creations. By the time he came to work on this ballet his great creative period was over, and the title role is no more than a mechanical mixture of elements from previous Massine creations such as Mariuccia in *Les Femmes de Bonne Humeur* and the Street Dancer in *Le Beau Danube*. As such, it gives only limited opportunities to the interpreter. All the same, it was interesting to see what Maryon Lane and Merle Park made of this role—for these are two of the most exciting young dancers in the world. Maryon Lane danced the role with her own unique and wonderful polish, giving to each step a gem-like quality, and showing the neatest pair of feet at the Garden. Merle Park did not dance the role so well—her arms were sometimes untidy, and she failed to establish certain positions cleanly—but she acted it better, injecting a more positive characterisation into the rather colourless role.

ANNETTE PAGE AS THE FIREBIRD

Annette Page stood by to dance the Firebird on December 3rd, when Margot Fonteyn's plane was grounded by fog; but happily Margot Fonteyn reached the theatre in time, and so Annette Page was able to make her debut in this very exacting role as planned on December 13th.

It was obvious that she had studied Margot Fonteyn's interpretation with care and intelligence, for she reproduced the detail of the choreography with considerable fidelity. She was seen to best advantage in big dancing steps such as the *grands jetés en avant*. But what she failed to do was to suggest the supernatural essence of the role: at moments of stillness, when Margot Fonteyn's face is transformed into the vibrant mask of an Indian Garuda, Annette Page's face was almost expressionless, and the eyes (turned upwards and to the side) looked mad rather than frightened. I am surprised that she was allotted this role, to which she is little suited by temperament: there are several other young dancers in the company who might be expected to do well in the part, even if they could hardly rival Margot Fonteyn's devastating interpretation.

AN EVENING OF MODERN DANCE

It was an excellent idea to bring together modern-dance items by five different teachers and dancers in one programme at the Related Arts Centre (Park Lane): this should have provided variety of theme, style and treatment. In fact, however, the items looked depressingly alike: for the most part they belonged stylistically to the twenties, and represented tepid versions of styles which even in the twenties had no meaning except for their creators. What is more, most of the dancers were depressingly amateurish.

Unlike ballet based on the classical technique, modern dance is by its very nature heretical and completely personal; each modern dancer or choreographer must create his own style and his own technique—and these must change with the changing Zeitgeist. Styles and their associated techniques preserved from the past tend to be as lifeless as wax dummies, and their poverty of technical vocabulary is revealed with embarrassing clarity. Of the items shown at the Related Arts Centre, only one showed the originality which is essential to modern dance. This was *Lylia*, with choreography by Colin Paterick. Though the choreographer and all three of his danseuses are trained by Sigurd Leeder, Colin Paterick did credit to his great teacher by breaking away from the choreographic style associated with Leeder and Jooss and tackling an original theme with some real invention. Introduced by a voice out of vision, three dancers showed three different aspects of the same woman: childish, grave, moody. Eileen Cropley and Rosemary Cockayne acted very well the childish and grave aspects, being perfectly cast and finding just the right balance of naturalism and stylization in their facial expressions; Ludmila Mlada was less happily cast in the moody aspect, which the choreographer did not seem to have thought out clearly. This was more of a mime-play than a dance-drama, but showed real promise in the choreographer: it will be interesting to watch his development.

TELEVISION BALLET — *Continued from page* 4

Sunday, December 21st. B.B.C. Television. Casse-Noisette.

Continuing its policy of producing slightly adapted television versions of favourite ballets, the B.B.C. presented on December 21st *Casse-Noisette*. The most remarkable feature of this production was that it had as its Sugar-Plum Fairy, Margot Fonteyn: viewers were fortunate in seeing Miss Fonteyn in a role which she never performs at Convent Garden. Ivanov's choreography was "recreated" for the occasion by Peter Wright—sometimes in a rather dull manner—but the grand pas de deux was superbly danced by Margot Fonteyn in the Karsavina version which she normally uses on Gala occasions; Michael Somes partnered her with his usual skill. Then we had the rare privilege of seeing her in the Sugar-Plum Fairy's solo, giving to this dance her own unique and sparkling tenderness.

Lucette Aldous was a good choice for the Snow Queen, dancing well in a solo in Act I and appearing again in Act II to lead the Dance of the Reed-Pipes. Unfortunately her facial expressions were rather lacking in variety, and this prevented her personality from coming over strongly.

Margaret Dale's production was straightforward and sensible, avoiding the gimmicky shots (with cameras sliding out from behind trees) which disfigured her production of *Giselle*; and she was aided

—Continued at foot of next column

FESTIVAL BALLET'S CASSE-NOISETTE

The Festival Ballet's Christmas season of *Casse-Noisette* (three weeks of twice-daily performances, all devoted to the one ballet) seems to have established itself as a hardy annual. The popularity of this Christmas show is easy to understand: it provides children with most of the things they expect in a pantomime (pretty costumes, a fairy queen, a transformation scene, and so on), and the standard of dancing, scenery, costumes and above all music is well ahead of that of most Christmas shows. Pantomimes are designed to appeal both to adults and to children, but in fact children make up a minority of pantomime audiences—sometimes a small minority; on the other hand the whole of the Festival Ballet's production of *Casse-Noisette* is within the understanding of children, and on the night I saw the show children represented nearly half the audience. (No doubt the proportion is even higher at matinées.)

As a Christmas show for children, I think this production of *Casse-Noisette* has many merits; its only serious deficiency is humour. There is an attempt at the slap-stick clowning that children adore in *Danse Arabe*, in which two Arabian figures keep pretending to drink a cup of coffee; but there is nothing in the least witty about their movements, and the children around me watched this item with dead-pan faces, taking it quite seriously.

From an adult point of view the most interesting aspect of this production is the design of the costumes by that grand old man of Russian ballet, Alexandre Benois. Some of his designs have been executed in unsuitable materials, such as shiny satins; but the colours are delightful, and it is a treat to see how the octogenarian Benois is able to keep his inventiveness.

As a grown-up, I have always found the mime scenes of Act 1 of *Casse* excessively lengthy and dull; and Lichine has not helped matters by introducing ponderous new versions of the doll dances, at a time when the action badly needs livening up. He has shown that he possesses a sense of humour by his ballet *Graduation Ball*, and if he is brought in to polish up the production he would do well to revise the doll dances. Checking up with a child acquaintance, I found that she liked best of all the Trepak, a Russian dance (with choreography by Beriosoff) performed by Donald McAlpine, Terry Gilbert and Roger LePage: this element of character dancing might well be strengthened.

There are several alternative casts for the principal roles. André Prokovsky (one of the Princes) is dancing better than ever, with admirable ease and balance; what he needs now is to develop a make-up which will make the best of his rough-hewn features. Above all he must enlarge his eyes: at present they are quite invisible.

by appropriate designs by Guy Sheppard (who did fine work in ballet before he moved into television). The great flaw of this production of *Casse-Noisette* was the excessive length of the mimed scenes in Act I. Even on the stage these scenes tend to drag, and on television—where everything is much more concentrated—they seemed interminable. The same dramatic point was made over and over again, with almost the same camera-angles, and the impact was weakened at each repetition. In general the B.B.C. deserves the highest praise for presenting major works at full length, with only minor cuts; but here weaknesses in the original demanded some major cuts.

MONTE CARLO

—J. R. FARRINGTON

It was just Ballet all the way at the Gala offered by H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco to his guests in the Salle Garnier on the occasion of the National Fête on November 19. As last year, Monsieur Besnard, Director of the Monte Carlo Opéra, called upon the Paris Opéra to provide the dancers for the programme of seven ballets, three being premières.

Following the arrival of the Princely party, greeted by the lively, if somewhat lengthy, Monégasque Anthem, the curtain rose to *Nuages et Fêtes*, music by Debussy and choreography by Lifar, well danced by Claire Motte and Roland Duflot, premier danseurs at the Paris Opéra. The première *Le Prince du Désert*, music by Damase and choreography by Skibine, who danced the ballet with Josette Amiel, I found somewhat disappointing. There was insufficient scope for artists of this calibre and the work left little impression. *Entre Deux Rondes*, music by Rousseau and choreography by Lifar, was delightfully danced by Liane Daydé and Renault. Vivid and sparkling, the tiny danseuse étoile made an ideal Degas dancer, skilfully introducing poses characteristic of the artist. Renault danced with fine and dignified restraint. Altogether a most pleasing ballet.

After the interval Claude Bessy and Algaroff gave us en première *Toi et Moi*, after the poem by Paul Géraldy, music by Richard Blareau and choreography by Lifar. Bessy has an attractive stage presence and few dancers can equal her in sensitive facial expression. Admirably partnered by Algaroff she seemed thoroughly to enjoy the ballet, dancing with great verve and clean technique. The last première, *Les Facheuses Recontres*, by Alwyn Camble to music by Jarre and choreography by Skibine was both amusing and effective. In 1912 a rich baron, Bozzoni, has met, in the absence of his wife, a somewhat vivacious lady, Marjorie Tallchief. They sup and dance to a gramophone in the baron's garden. But the lady is really attracted by the jewels of the baroness and she drugs her admirer, who falls asleep on a settee. Hastily discarding her finery she appears in the classic black justaucorps of the night thief. But when she reaches the safe she finds a cloaked and top-hatted figure already there, with the jewels in his hand. It is the famous burglar, Arsène Lupin (Skibine). She persuades Lupin to dance with her and then to accept a glass of wine. Neatly exchanging glasses she manages to drug him also and he falls beside the baron. Donning the jewellery she dances in mockery of the unconscious men and disappears with the booty. This was Tallchief's ballet and she took full advantage of the comedy and dramatic possibilities. This is clearly a ballet with much popular appeal.

Annabel Lee, after the story by E. A. Poe, to music by Byron Schiffman and choreography by Skibine, now followed. Unannounced on the programme a pleasant surprise was the singing of Poe's poem by the baritone Michel Carey with the orchestra, Richard Blareau finely controlling voice, music and dancing. Daydé and Algaroff really excelled in the slow tempo of this macabre story, with some exceptional lifts. An impressive and well produced ballet. The evening closed with *La Belle au Bois*

Continued at foot of next column

MOSCOW

—ILUNINA

GALINA ULANOVA IN "CHOPINIANA"

After an interval of nine years, the Bolshoi Theatre has again presented the ballet *Chopiniana*, compiled half a century ago by the prominent Russian choreographer Mikhail Fokine from an adaptation of Chopin's piano pieces. Galina Ulanova takes the leading role, as she did thirty years ago at the graduation performance of the Leningrad Choreographical School. Ulanova's performance today of course creates a more profound and poetical impression than it did then: the flowing, beautiful motion of the dance is now perfected by the greater inspiration and refinement of the great ballerina's art. She herself explains this in the following words:

"Chopin and *Chopiniana* played so great a role in the early days of my career that when the ballet was resumed all the thoughts and reminiscences connected with this music and these dances in my mind helped me extraordinarily.

"I love listening and dancing to Chopin's music. My first vivid recollection of this dates back to the twenties when I heard Vladimir Horowitz play Chopin. Naturally, at that time I could not foresee of what importance Chopin's music would be in the formation of my artistic personality. But the thing is that all our impressions of life accumulate in our hearts and the strongest of these influence the formation of what we call our 'artistic ego.' Chopin undoubtedly enriched me both as an individual and as a dancer. He was one of the first composers whose music I had the good luck to personify in the dance.

"In 1926, I first danced to Chopin's music in his *Scherzo*, at the Leningrad Choreographical School. At that time I did not yet understand his music well but I liked it immensely. Its melody and lightness inspired us all and seemed to call us to winged dance.

"Two years later, a few months before graduation, our class began to rehearse *Chopiniana*. This is a ballet without a subject, but not without content. The music iteself, youthful and delicate, forms the content of the dances. Watching the stage, the spectator even forgets the lack of action.

"Two years ago, I again heard Chopin rendered by a pianist whose playing revived my memories of youth, helped me in restoring the *Chopiniana*. I am thinking of the Greek pianist Georg Temelis. When I heard him the music seemed to me to be still more beautiful and entrancing."

MONTE CARLO—*Continned*

Dormant, music by Tchaikovsky and choreography by Lifar. This was an excellent choice for the finale and the divertissements were danced by all with joyous abandon, Bessy and Renault being outstanding in l'Oiseau Bleu. Renault was really in form for this Gala and gave us both fine dancing and an enviable perfection in partnering. Sometimes I have thought him a little relaxed in the atmosphere of the Mediterranean. None of the ballets called for anything remarkable in costume or décor.

Ballet enthusiasts here were naturally pleased that the Prince approved an all ballet programme for his Gala. Rainier III and the Princess Grace seem determined to restore Monte Carlo to its old eminence in the Ballet world.

PARIS

—FERDINAND REYNA

LUBOV EGOROVA

On November 27th, a group of personalities from the dance world and friends of ballet gave a dinner in one of the most elegant clubs of the Champs Elysées in honour of Madame Lubov Egorova. As is well-known, Madame Egorova after being one of the most admired stars of the Imperial Ballet and of the Diaghilev company, has to her credit 35 years of teaching in Paris and one has lost count of the number of artists trained by her. Those present at the dinner included Serge Lifar, George Skibine, Marjorie Tallchief, Lyane Daydé, Serge Golovine, Rosella Hightower, Nina Vyroubova, Milorad Miskovitch, Genia Melikova, Iréne Lidova, Ferdinand Reyna, A. Schaikewitch, Edmond Linval etc. Jean Dorcy made a short, moving speech in which he paid homage to this great artist.

DE CUEVAS BALLET

The Marquis de Cuevas Ballet finished its season at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées on December 9th in triumph. *L'Ile Cruelle*, a new version of the ballet *La Griffe*, presented originally by the Compagnie des Ballets 1958 with Veronika Mlakar (music by François Serrette, choreography by John Taras, costumes and decors by Alwyn Camble) was danced on this occasion by Colette Marchand. The story of this ballet is briefly that of the "Island of Doctor Moreau" by Wells. Although the ballet itself might have been more developed, Colette Marchand gave a very fine interpretation of the role of the woman-panther. Feline and pliant, at once cruel and amorous, Colette Marchand was the human animal in full measure. The role might have run the risk of being grotesque but it was not so in any way. Colette Marchand showed herself to be a very accomplished artist without any exaggeration whatsoever.

John Taras created *La Fôret Romantiquz*, to "The Seasons" by Glazounov, with decors by Bernard Daydé. It was by way of being a very successful act of homage to the genius of Marius Petipa. Into the forest come one after the other, Jacqueline Moreau, the young Santestevan and Nina Vyroubova. The latter portrays magnificently the romantic spirit of the work. She has however been superbly successful during the whole de Cuevas season whether in *La Somnambule*, *Giselle* or *Tarasiana*. During these performances she has shown the whole range of her fine artistic talent. The masculine stars of *La Fôret Romantique* George Goviloff, Vasil Tupin, Nicholas Polajenko did not have the opportunity to assert themselves but they danced with a perfect bearing which was appreciated by the public.

The men's *Pas de Quatre* by Anton Dolin, danced by Serge Golovine, Nicholas Polajenko, Vasil Tupin and George Goviloff left us less satisfied than the performance by the London Festival Ballet at the Théâtre des Nations with John Gilpin at the head. With the de Cuevas company it seemed to have less unity and cohesion than with the English dancers.

The *Rose Adagio* with Nicholas Polajenko, Vasil Tupin, George Goviloff and Philippe Salem was an unprecedented triumph for Rosella Hightower. The art of Rosella Hightower seems to evade analysis. What is the secret of her hold on the public ? Perhaps

she dances with complete liberty of mind and body without any preoccupation with that technique the difficulties of which she has mastered and which becomes with her pure dancing. As for her ballon, soft, smooth and silent landing on the stage can only be compared, as far as my memory serves me, to the great Alicia Markova. All this is very marvellous.

Amongst the newcomers to the Marquis' company, the young English dancer Carmen Mathé is to be noted. She has during her two years with the company been attracting the attention of the connoisseurs. In the first place she is gifted with very good shoulders and an extremely interesting back and instep, ideal qualities for a young beginner. In *Concerto Barocco*, in the role of one of the sisters of Sebastian, and in the dance of the two piccaninnies in *Somnambule*, Carmen Mathé showed some excellent qualities which I am happy to point out.

LÉON ANLEN

Jean Dorcy, President of the Association Danse et Culture summoned the choreographic press of Paris on November 24th to be present at a lesson in classical dancing given by the master choreographer Léon Anlen, a Pole, a certificated teacher at the National Institute of theatrical art in Moscow where he has studied for six years in the advanced choreographic section.

Léon Anlen has been established in Paris for a year where he applies the system of instruction now in use at the theatre schools in the Soviet Union. This lesson was most interesting. One could see that the work of the pupils was in no way mechanical but, on the contrary, dancing all the time. The care which the master took in the correct composition of the bust, the back, the shoulders was also very marked. It is the aspect that Léon Anlen stresses the most, and it is this very aspect which is however only too often neglected. Before the summer, Léon Anlen was engaged by the Marquis de Cuevas to compose the choreography of a ballet. His work was already begun when the young maître was badly injured in the legs and he was forced to rest for many months.

RUSSIAN DANCERS AND SINGERS

On November 27th, the group Chanteurs et Danseurs de la Volga consisting of some 60 artists performed with success at the Grand Théâtre du Châtelet. Unfortunately they presented folklore in its pure form and the numbers that were shown have already been given by other companies from the same country. Inevitably there was a certain monotony about the programme. It would seem that the dancers and singers of the Volga have not yet found their Moisseyev, capable of transforming the folklore element into a theatrical work. The songs and the choirs are clearly very fine and they combine all the melancholy, the joy of living and the power of choral singing for which the Russians seem to have a gift.

* * *

GEORGE Skibine has been appointed maître de ballet at the Opéra and has taken up the post left vacant by the departure of Serge Lifar. Apart from the ballets which he will direct himself, the choreography at the Opéra will also be entrusted to Harald Lander the permanent choreographer and to invited choreographers such as George Balanchine, Heinz Rosen, Massine.

The Association des Critiques Lyriques et Choreographiques Français have awarded their prize for the best ballet in 1958 to *Concerto* by André Jolivet, choreography by George Skibine, created at the Opéra Comique on March 28th, 1958.

Concerto in fact has been the greatest success of the Parisian stage for some time. The renowned French composer recently explained to me the origin of this ballet. It will be remembered that his concerto for piano and orchestra created a real scandal at its first performance whilst it had a triumphant reception at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées four years later. The concerto was transmitted and Skibine heard it in Chicago. He conceived the idea of a ballet without a plot but with a theme "the human being and his desire." On his return to Paris, his idea was approved by the composer and by the management of the Théâtre. André Jolivet told me of the amazement he felt when he saw Skibine, who was directing the ballet, following the orchestral score. He thus saw the beginning of the plastic expression of his music, each note in the score being expressed by a muscular movement, an attitude or a saut. The characteristic of this ballet is the complete continuity of the movement. It is an unfolding of new figures all of which however are in the traditional language of the ballet.

On October 27th, on the occasion of the Gala des Nations Unies in Paris, *Concerto* was transferred from the Opéra Comique to the Opéra. It had an equally great success and principal dancers George Skibine, Marjorie Tallchief, Michel Reyne, Ninon Lebertre, J. B. Lemoine and Jacques Chazot were much applauded.

Marina Svetlova, star of the Metropolitan Opera in New York danced the pas de deux from *Casse Noisette* at the Théâtre National de l'Opéra Comique, Paris with Peter Van Dijk as partner. Despite a very forced technique, Marina Svetlova is gifted with a real charm, an undeniable brilliance and a harmonious line. Jacques Chazot, the premier danseur at the Opéra Comique, presented in the same performance his own pas de trois to music by Meyerbeer, with the star dancers Madeleine Lafon and Marielle Krempf. This insignificant pas de trois was however enlivened by an exhibition of fouettés and masculine pointes which Chazot, the witty man that he is, has already used in his pieces imitating great stars which have always been little chefs d'oeuvres of comedy. Jacques Chazot is well worth seeing in certain extracts from *Giselle*, with his tutu and black bandeaux, dancing the romantic parts with an imperturbable seriousness which takes all sense of parody from his imitations but which is irresistibly funny.

On October 18 and 20, the Spanish dancer Tere Amoros made her debut in Paris with two performances at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées. One must not expect from this dancer, aged 23, the brilliance of a great personality. The flamenco is certainly not her style but in the classical numbers she is excellent. Her style is pure and she has a distinguished bearing. Her costumes have distinction from an artistic point of view.

Tere Amoros is the daughter of a torero from Salamanca. She made her debut in her own country and then toured the Americas having a dazzling success at the Carnegie Hall in New York.

As always, before the Paris debut of his company (which took place on October 28th at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées), the Marquis de Cuevas held a cocktail party for his friends. This time it was held in his apartment in the Quai Voltaire, amongst his paintings by the masters and his objets d'art. The Marquis received his guests in his bed, surrounded by his famous dogs. The gala première of his ballet was first of all a spectacle in the theatre. Very elegant and extravagant toilettes, young men in mauve or blue dinner-jackets, the young women in black and white evening dresses . . . *Sebastian*, a ballet by Gian Carlo Menotti and choreography by Edward Caton, which had been seen on the first performance of the Marquis de Cuevas company in Paris in 1947 was presented on this occasion with décors and costumes by Leonor Fini. The action takes place in Venice in the 16th century and this genial painter has achieved a real work of art. Sumptuous and with a harmonious combination of colours, these costumes are a feast for the eyes, ranging from a delicate rose to black with touches of gold, emerald and sapphire. It is like seeing a canvas by Carpaccio or Giovanni Bellini come to life. Nicholas Polajenko and Rosella Hightower were the dancers in this new magnificently dressed *Sebastian*. On the other hand, *Cat's Cradle* with choreography by John Cranko, full as it was with strange choreographic and musical inventions, only had a very cool reception, as the humour and wit of the ballet did not come over clearly to the public. Cenia Melikova was the principal dancer in this very complicated ballet.

We saw again with pleasure, *Noir et Blanc*, ballet by Serge Lifar, music by Lalo, but this time there was no duel between the Marquis and the choreographer! *

Finally, the *Pas de Trois* by George Balanchine interpreted by Rosella Hightower, Serge Golovine and Jacqueline Moreau. Nina Vyroubova was ill and her place was taken in the first performances by Colette Marchand—more beautiful than ever.

The second spectacle by the de Cuevas Ballet was less successful than the first. Public and critics alike passed quite severe judgment on *La Mort de Narcisse*, a ballet to very colourless inconsistent music by Claude Pothier, choreography by Serge Golovine, decors and costumes by André Delfau. A pas de deux and some childishly composed evolutions, even when danced by Serge Golovine and Nina Vyroubova, do not constitute a ballet. The same goes for the ballet *Le Mal du Siècle* with Rosella Hightower and Nicholas Polajenko as the principal dancers. According to the author, le mal du siècle is like the mal d'amour for which there is only one antidote, the dance. This theme is as good as any other, but it is developed without brilliance or imagination. In any case modern themes, that is to say those which demand a modern technique and outlook, do not seem to be successful with the Marquis' company. They do not have the spirit and feeling for dances with a jazz rhythm. Even Rosella Hightower when she dances the calypso still does so in the spirit of the *Cygne Noir* or *Casse Noisette*.

FERDINAND REYNA

**See May issue of Ballet Today.*

Stuttgart

The Noverre Society, sister society of our Munich Friends of Ballet Society, came out with a very successful evening before an audience of four hundred people. O. F. Regner had sent in a lecture on the development of styles in ballet and, as examples, the pas de deux from *Giselle*, *Les Sylphides*, *Don Quixote*, *Apollon Musagète*, and jazz dancing were presented by soloists of Beriosoff's company.

Yvette Chauviré as Giselle in Stuttgart, December 13th and 17th. Beriosoff's complete *Nutcracker* there on December 23rd (to be reviewed in the next issue).

WILFRIED HOFMANN

MUNICH

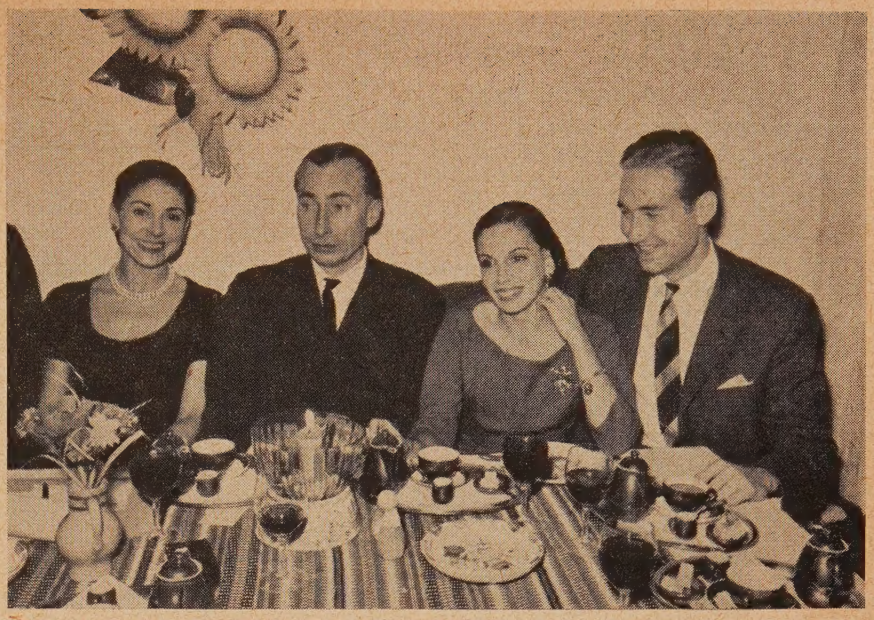
—DR. WILFRIED HOFMANN

THE season in Munich continued with Keita Fodeba's African Ballets, the American Festival Ballet, Susana and José and guest performances of Irene Skorik partnered by Milorad Miskovitch (Nov. 21) and Margot Fonteyn with Michael Somes (Dec. 2) in *Giselle*. Since the guest companies and José have been more fully covered already, I want to confine myself to one remark—it is pleasant to note that there is a guiding hand of a choreographer-producer behind the programme of Keita Fodeba's Ballet. He proves that nakedness on stage has nothing to do with sex or strip-tease as long as it is not isolated or accentuated. The truly erotic air of the stylised programme is organically developed through the impression of an animal-like corporeality and an ecstasy which is ritually motivated.

We were pleased to see Milorad Miskovitch again, and he has astonishingly improved in his technique. His Albrecht gave an absolutely perfect display of beautiful poses in the Lifar tradition.

Margot Fonteyn's performance was met with the greatest applause which, as she admitted, she had ever met anywhere. Even during photographing she had to slip again and again through the iron curtain because the audience remained clapping for twenty minutes. Her interpretation, in a marvellous *Giselle* season in Munich, set the highest standard for the second Act, and the most satisfying overall performance of any of the guest ballerinas of this year. Galina Ulanova's first act however, it seems to me, still remains "untackled" from the point of view of acting.

Alan Carter is well under way with his production of *Ondine*, which is scheduled for January 20th, and will be reviewed in our next issue.



Our picture shows (l to r) *Margot Fonteyn, H.H. Karl Viktor Prinz zu Wied, Dulce Anaya, ballerina with the Munich Staatsoper, and Dr. Wilfried Hofmann, our critic in Munich, dining at the famous Hungarian Restaurant* Piroschka *during the visit of Dame Margot to that city.*

The American Festival Ballet

During the summer of 1958 Renzo Raiss, somewhere in or around Bremen, Germany, assembled a group of about 20 dancers, some of them American, and set out to tour small towns in Germany. Since he was able to finance seven ballets and present Sonja Arova as prima ballerina it looked like a very commendable undertaking. No one would have minded that while some of his dancers (Job Sanders and William Milié!) are excellent, the majority are mediocre, and that the ballets, too, consist of a funny mixture of the good and the unbearable. One would even have excused a sad production of *Swan Lake*, Act II, as long as presented in provincial areas only. Through all too clever advertisements however people believed that the company is well known in the United States, and also associated the name with the very solid name of London's Festival Ballet. In the big cities, like Munich, the audiences necessarily felt abused when they found out the facts. They left angrily since even in show-business there exist limits which the smallest companies simply have to mind. Of course, the American Festival Ballet well survived their German season, and moved on into Switzerland, Italy and Spain, but they have ruined the field for others. The repertoire of the company consists of three ballets by Job Sanders, *Contretemps* (music: Gabriel Fauré; decor: William Pitkin), *Five Diversions* (music: Edvard Grieg's Holberg Suite) and *Bacchianas Brazilieras* (music: Villa-Lobos) and two ballets by Renzo Raiss, *Rencontre* and *Die Elfenbeinkugel* ("The Ivory Ball"), both to music by Hermann Kropatschek. Also *Swan-Lake*, the *Don Quixote* and *Nutcracker* Pas de Deux and a truly funny "Westerner," *Shindig* (Choreography: Loyd Tygett; music: Don Gilles).

With every one of his ballets Job Sanders proves to be a very talented and sincere choreographer. While his *Five Diversions* remain in the pattern of symphonic abstract ballets the fourth diversion ("Air") contains one of the most beautiful pas de deux I have ever seen. Performed by Sanders and Arova it is a dance of a remote, tender beauty. Sanders only slightly deviates from classic models and arrives at something very new and very much lost in reverie. *Contretemps*, on the other hand, brings modern poetry, surrealist humour, and a pleasant harmony of all components. Here Sanders' choreography follows the Tudor tradition and in telling the story gives a good example of the well-integrated unity of modernism and classic in the American School. *Contretemps* was first performed in March through the Robert Joffrey Theatre Ballet at the Brooklyn Academy of Music—"*Bacchianas Brazilieras*" is a dance like a mournful song. Sonia Arova with a truly tragic face seems to be entirely wrapped up in a widow's grief. This world of grief—seemingly self-enjoyed by the widow—is symbolised through the arms of two men who encircle her.

Renzo Raiss' ballets on the other hand are complete failures and are based on intolerable music. Disharmonies and noise don't make modernism, and modern librettos which tell a story up to the last detail in movements don't make modern ballets! *Die Elfenbeinkugel* transfers a gambling place right into hell, and it is Satan himself guiding the ivory ball. This libretto—what a feat if done by Béjart—is ruined by Raiss through a pedantic way of leaving nothing to our own imagination. The poor gambling boy (Savino) has to play and to lose five times, and we don't even know on which colour he had risked his money and—finally—his soul. The ivory ball (Hennessy) doesn't roll about the stage in quick chaînés, manéges or piqués but in a tutu entirely out of place she rattles about the stage, tensionless, and it becomes all a big bore. Similar mistakes are made in *Rencontre*—a tasteless narrative. The atmosphere is supposed to be sexy, and is in effect so sterile. We start in horror and end in boredom.

It is a pity that most of the ballets are based on Christine Hennessy and Joseph Savino since both of them lack personality and stage presence and—obviously—self-criticism. Hennessy's ports de bras seem to be pounded in her, hard worked upon and—at times—forgotten. So she has no authority as Odette. She carries her head in a way which in everyday life is associated with a swan—but even in *Swan Lake* this is not permissible. Savino's technique also leaves him with a "dead" body from his thighs up. He tends to "sit" and walks in a way as if he was rather deaf or had just stepped off a horse. This destroys any nobility, and he as Siegfried is pitifully "outnobled" by Benno (Milié). Milié is a demonic dancer with great command of his gestures, and has a striking appearance as Croupier in *Elfenbeinkugel*, Lover in *Contretemps* and Gangster in *Shindig*. Only Arova, however, can claim ballerina qualities. With her exotic face which points more to Red Indian than to her Bulgarian origin, she has great possibilities. Partnered by Job Sanders they execute the *Don Quixote* pas de deux not only brilliantly but with the allure and thrill of its style. The rest of the company—trained under Leonid Gonta, Russo-German balletmaster from Munich—has improved during the season and dances tolerably well—except in *Swan Lake*, since here we cannot give credit for experiments. Done on recorded music, at times with only three cygnets (!), the production cannot overcome provincial niveau and should be limited to the purpose of propagating ballet where it hasn't been seen before.

If, however, the American Festival Ballet is going to continue I would suggest they read their programme notes before distributing them. They would find listed as ballets (!) people like Nora Kaye, Hugh Lang and Diana Adams, and they would read of people called Serge Lifas, Geogre Balachin and Erik Brun. Why suggest dilettantism even before the curtain goes up?

NEW YORK

—WALTER SORELL

BERYOZKA DANCE COMPANY

AFTER the strong impact the Moiseyev Ballet had on all lovers of the dance, the Beryozka Dance Company was, no doubt, anticlimactic. This all-girl group, accompanied by five male accordionists, has been here for a transcontinental tour, sponsored by S. Hurok. But in spite of all shortcomings their performance is an impressive treat for the eyes.

As a matter of fact, I would like to single out the costume designer Lyubov Silich above everyone else, since his contribution shows the most flawless artistry. I left the theatre with a joyful feeling of having witnessed a display of dazzling colours, a profusion and sumptuousness of visual delight, a richness in design.

And this is not said to slight the 43 dancers. They are extremely beautiful girls who can dance well. They all come from the Bolshoi Ballet School, have thorough balletic training, are theatrically exciting. To every number they bring a winning charm, some humour, style, precision—and what precision! It is more of a folk dance group than the Moiseyev Ballet, and yet there are no real folk dances in it. Their nature and basic steps are somehow worked into original theatre compositions.

There's the rub. Although objection can hardly be raised to the artistic intention, or the execution of each single dance, where they are seen together something strange happens to these materials. There is so much sameness, so much done on one level with similar ideas which are only slightly varied, that you cannot help feeling a profound emptiness. In the second part the trifling triteness becomes more than obvious, and this in spite of the fact that nothing is done without taste or artistic know-how.

The fault lies with the choreography which works with too many gimmicks and too few ideas. The gliding movement, used with such stunning effect in the *Partisan* number by Moiseyev, is overdone to the point of nausea. There it served the vital purpose of heightening the content of the story, here it is nothing but a trick which, once seen, loses interest. In the opening number, *Beryozka,* meaning birch tree, we find the entire range of Nadezha Nadeshdina's choreographic ideas from A to B. With the exception of *Troika,* a pleasant trio, we only see ensemble numbers which are more or less variations of the first dance.

Another handicap lies in the fact that it is an all-girl ensemble, with two of the accordionists thrown into the little action there is here and there. It seems that the two sexes were also created for the sake of theatrical variety. Moreover, an accordion is a wonderful instrument, and these five Russians undoubtedly master it. It may even help giving the show a rustic touch. But a whole evening of accordion-playing seems to have added to the feeling of monotony.

Every single number was flawlessly danced and beautifully costumed, each of them a pearl. All these pearls lacked was lustre.

ANNUAL CAPEZIO AWARD

The Annual Capezio Award, the "oscar" in the dance field, has gone to Sol Hurok this year. If any person who is not a performer or choreographer, has ever deserved to be cited for his contribution to the dance then it is certainly S. Hurok, impresario in the grand old style, who has immensely enriched the dance- and theatre-world in these States.

His work has gone far beyond the mere notion of management, he has proved artistic foresight, an adventurous spirit that has been creative in its own way. Much of the credit must go to Mr. Hurok for the fact that not only one or another cultural centre, but all of America has become dance conscious. He has done a decisive service for the ballet and modern dance, a service that gained historic importance, when, under his aegis, Anna Pavlova and later Mary Wigman toured this country. But these are only two names in a long row of the best the dance world has to offer, from Isadora Duncan to Margot Fonteyn. He gave us the Moiseyev group last season which will be followed by the Bolshoi Ballet next spring.

While the Beryozka Dance Company is seen in New York, Robert Iglesias' Ballet Español stopped on its tour in South Dakota, the Scots Guards are in Montreal and the "Old Vic" is in Chicago. They all are presented by Sol Hurok.

CHICAGO

—LEON L. BRAM

BALLET GUILD OF CHICAGO

A round-up of dance activities in and around Chicago for October and November shows great diversity and no little accomplishment. The Ballet Guild of Chicago annual benefit show *Stars of the Dance* belied the usual pattern of such events. An appearance by José Greco and his company supplied high polish. There was much modern jazz dancing. In this vein Bic Carrol gave a demonstration of eye-popping technique and strong characterization that proved the worth of this much mis-used style. Choreographer and teacher Charles Bockman created a pas de deux to the first section of the slow movement of Rachmaninoff's Second Symphony. It was a beautiful work (as are all Mr. Bockman's creations), and was movingly danced by Kenneth Johnson, principal dancer with the Ruth Page company, and Jane Bockman. The programme closed on a note of creation, portions of a new ballet by Dom Orejudos to the Shostakovitch suite, Ballet Russe, called *A la Foire.* A charming tableau charmingly performed by Anna Marie, Carol Fleming, Diane de Lacey, June Armin and Mr. Orejudos. Altogether, a most enjoyable afternoon.

NEW YORK CITY BALLET

The New York City Ballet skirted Chicago in a tour of several universities. We intercepted them at Purdue U. in Indiana. The Music Hall of that institution is a replica in size of Radio City Music Hall in New York City. The Saturday evening performance of October 11 found the company tired, and not quite up to extending their technique to the size of the stage. A programme of *Serenade, Fanfare,* and *Western Symphony* emphasized this. Another drawback of a repertoire too-heavily slanted towards the dance for dance's sake. Patricia Wilde and Andre Eglevsky supplied the expected applause gathering pyrotechnics in the *Sylvia* pas de deux.

The Sunday afternoon performance was, however, a different story. Jerome Robbins' *Interplay,* a work previously given short shrift by this company, opened the programme with vigour and sparkle. Much of this was the work of Arthur Mitchell, a young Negro dancer of tremendous spirit, technique, and grace. The second movement found its perfect interpreter in him. A good performance of a bad ballet, Balanchine's *Scotch Symphony,* led innocuously enough, to the highlight of the engagement, Robbins' *The Cage.* Allegra Kent, one of the young, up-coming talents of the company, brought to the part of The Novice a quality not seen before by your reviewer in its previous interpretations—allurement. A strong word for a female insect, or an Amazon, but nonetheless an essential quality of the very heart of the story. One could readily sympathize with the male victims seeing their temptation. *Bourrée Fantasque* closed on a note of hysteria.

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

The University of Chicago presented two performances of the Neville Black Dance Company October 17 and 18. Mr. Black is from Jamaica, and has studied with Martha Graham. His style, which may be called modern, lies in the relationship of movement around a centrepoint of balance, usually the hip. It is flowing, usually soft, and somewhat monochromatic. An injection of calypso and jazz is used quite often to provide contrast.

ROBERTO IGLESIAS

Roberto Iglesias brought his Spanish Dance Company to Chicago for two performances Sunday, November 2. The group as a whole is young, handsome, and somewhat unexciting. Technique is of a high level, especially in its ballet background. The repertoire reflects a use of many dance roots besides the Spanish. Unfortunately, they are not so well used as in Luisillo's group. However, in the performances of Iglesias, Anna Mercedes, and the Galán sisters, Rosario and Esperanza, there was the electricity and imperious grace expected in the Spanish dance.

REGIONAL BALLET

A programme including *Giselle* was given by the Regional Ballet in mid-November. Ex-Wells dancers Robert Lunnon and Doreen Tempest, teachers in the Allegro School from which most of the dancers come, produced and starred in the ballet. It was a worthwhile attempt to bridge the gap between a school recital and a company performance. Miss Tempest's Giselle was a marvel of technique in adage and grand allegro. She was capably supported by her husband, Robert Lunnon. The performance of William Sturges as Hilarion was the finest this reviewer has yet seen in any company. The leading wilis were danced with true professionalism by Ann Evangelist and Joan Lorin.

LEON L. BRAM

CHICAGO: News Items

After participating in Lyric Opera's autumn season at Chicago's Civic Opera House, the Chicago Opera Ballet will start on its annual tour of the United States. To a repertory already bursting with ballets based on operas, choreographer Ruth Page is adding *Flora's Friend,* an attempt to translate Verdi's *La Traviata* into dance. Regular soloists of the company are Barbara Steele and Kenneth Johnson; guest soloists for this tour are Marjorie Tallchief, George Skibine and Veronika Mlakar.

Carl Wolz, artistic adviser to Chicago's other company—the American Festival Ballet—was in town briefly at the end of November. He reports that the troupe's European tour is a financial success; reviews have been good except in Berlin. American Festival Ballet boasts three resident choreographers—Renzo Raiss, Job Sanders and Loyd Tygett. Soloists are Sonia Arova, Job Sanders, Christine Hennesey and Joseph Savino.

Chicago's leading modern dancer, Sybil Shearer, is reorganizing her long dormant company for performances in New York City and the Chicago area later in winter.

GEORGE JACKSON

Photographing the Ballet

Selections from the works of famous photographers

Eight studies
of
GISELLE

HOUSTON ROGERS
LONDON

Nadia Nerina and Nicolai Fadeyechev
in the Television performance of *Giselle.*

Margot Fonteyn as *Giselle*

Yvette Chauviré as *Giselle*

Giselle . . . Galina Ulanova

★ PHOTOGRAPHING THE BALLET ★

THE BOLSH

Queen of the Wılis . . . Rimma Karelskaya

Albrecht . . . Nicolai Fadeyechev

...OI GISELLE

★ HOUSTON ROGERS, LONDON ★

Hilarion . . . Vladimir Levashev

1949 **NEW YORK . . .** *Le Combat*

1952 **PARIS** with Yvette Chauviré, Ballets de Marigny

MILORAD MISKOVITCH

Milorad Miskovitch was born in Valjevo a small town near Belgrade, and is a pure Serbian type with blonde hair, fair complexion and blue-grey eyes. His finely chiselled features and slim athletic body make him the ideal danseur noble, and his charm and courtesy on stage reflect his true character.

Although the fates were good to him in bestowing these natural gifts upon him, his life has not by any means been an easy one, and now at the age of thirty he has behind him a long theatrical career, with a great deal of experience.

At a very early age Miskovitch was already embarked on a career as actor and singer and it was not until he reached the age of fourteen that he became seriously interested in ballet. He then commenced to study under Nina Kirsanova in Belgrade, dancing at concerts with ballerina Vera Kostich at the Belgrade Philharmonia, and, at the age of fifteen, was engaged to dance at the Belgrade Opera.

Arriving in Paris with a Folk Ensemble in May 1946 the young dancer made a decision which was to affect the whole course of his career. Realising that he had much to learn, he decided to stay in Paris and work hard under two great teachers—Olga Preobrajenska and Boris Kniaseff. They moulded the eighteen-year-old boy in his career as a classical dancer.

An engagement followed with Les Ballets des Champs Elysées, but when the opportunity came to join Colonel de Basil's Company then leaving for London, he went with them to dance at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden in August 1947. In the autumn of the same year he also danced with Mona Inglesby's International Ballet in London.

In 1948 he became a soloist with the de Cuevas Monte Carlo Ballet touring England dancing in *Giselle* with Rosella Hightower. Then in December of the same year he joined the Roland Petit Ballet de Paris, then forming, and partnered Renée Jeanmaire. It was with this Company that Miskovitch became internationally famous in the ballet *Le Combat* and was dancing this with Colette Marchand in New York in 1949 when he reached the age of twenty-one.

All this time the young dancer had not spared himself. The years of privation and struggle when he often had to sleep in Underground stations and sometimes even go short of food, coupled with the ceaseless hard work and drive for perfection, had taken their toll. At a time when it looked as if his future as a star could know no limits, he became so ill that the career for which he had made so many sacrifices had to be abandoned for a whole year.

The years of struggle however had given him courage and persistence, and 1951 saw him back again, this time at the Stoll Theatre, London, where he danced *Giselle* with Mia Slavenska as guest artist for London's Festival Ballet. Later in the same year he was with Janine Charrat at the Fenice Theatre, Venice. When Janine Charrat gave a season at the Empire Theatre Paris, Miskovitch was the principal star in this choreographer's ballets. He then partnered Yvette Chauviré the great French ballerina in a new company the "Ballets de Marigny" where he was the principal male star. His next engagement was with Lycette Darsonval, ballerina of the Paris Opéra, who was producing a classical programme on tour.

Alicia Markova had seen Miskovitch dance during his London season at the Stoll, and in 1954 she invited him to partner her for a concert tour of Great Britain. During this engagement Miskovitch appeared in London, at the Albert Hall, and later followed the great English ballerina to America, where they appeared in Hollywood at the Greek Theatre. This was followed by a tour of Japan with a group of American dancers, where with Colette Marchand he created the Paul Szilard ballet *Salome*.

Continued on page 18

1954 **LONDON** with Alicia Markova in *Nutcracker*

1955 **JAPAN** with Colette Marchand

1957 **PARIS** with Marie-Claire Carrié in *Promethée*

MONTE CARLO *Night Shadow* with Nina Vyroubova

MILORAD MISKOVITCH—(*Continued*)

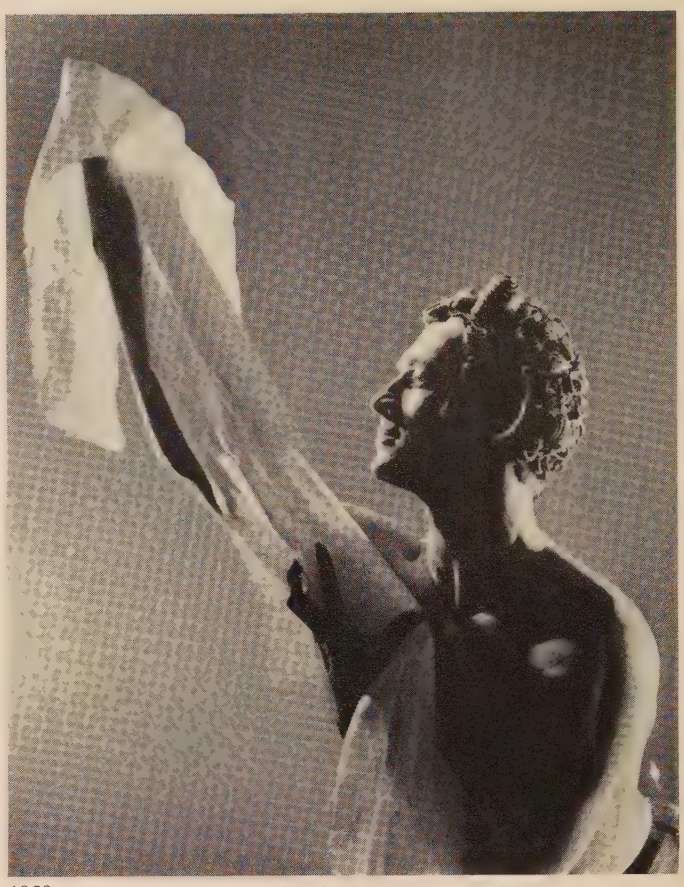
In 1955 at the Enghien Festival, with Irene Skorik, Miskovitch created *La Dryade* and shortly afterwards danced the principal role in Maurice Béjart's ballet *Haut Voltage*, a modern work which gave him full scope to show his ability in a dramatic role.

It was in this year that Miskovitch began to make plans for something which had been near to his heart for some time—the formation of his own company. This was a long and difficult task but together with Irene Lidova, whose help and encouragement had never ceased throughout the years, they founded the "Ballets 1956 de Paris" at the Lyon Festival, presenting *Promethée*, Walter Gore's *Les Saisons* and Dick Sanders' *L'Echelle*. At first of course they had to wait for engagements, but gathering around him a talented group of young dancers from Paris, and with the encouragement and help of Parisian painters and musicians he used young choreographers of the new school as well as the English choreographer Walter Gore. The Monte Carlo Opera also played a great part in encouraging the young group, and it was largely due to the engagements they offered them during their early days that Miskovitch was able to enlarge the repertory.

In 1957 the Company toured Italy, and South America and danced with "Les Ballets de Pâques" at the Monte Carlo Opera with Miskovitch in the role of the Poet in *The Night Shadow*, with Nina Vyroubova. The same year he was invited to dance with an Italian group, appearing in *The Miraculous Mandarin* staged by Aurelio M. Milloss. The year closed with a Parisian season at the Théâtre Marigny with his own Company.

In 1958 the "Ballets 1958 de Paris" danced in about 40 towns in Germany, in North Africa, and had their first London season at the Sadler's Wells Theatre. Following his success in London Miskovitch appeared at the Edinburgh Festival in Andrée Howard's ballet *La Belle Dame sans Merci*, and later, with the Ballet Rambert during their London season at the Sadler's Wells Theatre, danced the Faune in *L'Après Midi d'un Faune* and the role of Albrecht in *Giselle*.

His performance in these roles left no doubt that less than ten years after his first star appearance with the Roland Petit Company, Miskovitch has emerged not only as an outstanding male dancer in the field of contemporary ballet, but as a truly great danseur noble and mature artist.



1958 As the Faune

. . . RÔLES DANCED . . .

1943
With the Belgrade Opera
La Boutique Fantasque and other title parts.

1946
Arrived in Paris with a Folk Ensemble.
Joined Les Ballets des Champs Elysées.

1947
With the de Basil Company at the Royal Opera House, London.
First solo parts the Earth in *The Silver Birch*, Nicolo in *Good Humoured Ladies*, the Wolf in *Aurora's Wedding*.
With Mona Inglesby's International Ballet in London, dancing the Poet in *Les Sylphides*.

1948–9
With the de Cuevas Monte Carlo Ballet as soloist.
Danced in *Giselle* with Rosella Hightower (in England), Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet* with Ethery Pagava.
with Roland Petit's Ballets de Paris
Danced with Renée Jeanmaire in *Que le Diable Emporte*
The role of the Hussar in *Le Beau Danube*.
The ballet staged by Frederick Ashton *Le Rêve de Léonor* (where he partnered Renée Jeanmaire) *Adame Miroir*, *Le Rendez Vous*, *Le Combat*.

1951
With London's Festival Ballet as guest artist at the Stoll Theatre, London.
Danced in *Giselle* with Mia Slavenska.
At the Enghien Festival: *Les Facheux*.
In Biarritz: The Poet in *Melos*
At the Fenice Theatre in Venice
Orfeo with Janine Charrat

1952–53
With Ballets de Marigny
as principal male star and partner to Yvette Chauviré danced *L'Ecuyère*, *Les Enfants Sages* and classical repertory
Joined Lycette Darsonval in a classical programme on tour
With Janine Charrat Ballet as guest artist
Created *Heraklès*, *Concerto*

1954–55
Partnered Alicia Markova in a concert tour of England, appearing at the Albert Hall, London. Danced with Markova in *Nutcracker Suite*, *Les Sylphides*, *Prelude à l'Après Midi d'un Faune*. Later joined Markova in America, appearing at the Greek Theatre in Hollywood, Paris and the Nervi Festival in Genoa
Tour of Japan,
dancing with Colette Marchand in *Salome*, *Le Combat*, *Swan Lake*, etc.
At the Enghien Festival
with Irene Skorik created *La Dryade*
Danced the principal part in Maurice Bejart's ballet *Haut Voltage*

1956
Founded The Ballets 1956 de Paris (with Irene Lidova) at the Lyon Festival. Miskovitch appeared as *Promethée*, and also presented Walter Gore's *Les Saisons* and Dick Sanders' *L'Echelle*

1957
With his own group he toured Italy, South America
Danced with Les Ballets de Pâques at the Monte Carlo Opera in the role of the Poet in *Night Shadow* with Nina Vyroubova
Guest artist with an Italian group where he appeared as the mandarin in the *Miraculous Mandarin* staged by Aurelio M. Milloss
Parisian season at Théâtre Marigny with his own company

1958
Toured with his group "Ballets 1958 des Etoiles de Paris," in forty German towns; in North Africa, and for a London Season at the Sadler's Wells Theatre
Later in the year Miskovitch appeared at the
Edinburgh Festival in Andrée Howard's ballet *La Belle Dame sans Merci*, and with **The Ballet Rambert** during their London Season at Sadler's Wells Theatre, dancing the Faune in *L'Après midi d'un Faune*, and Albrecht in *Giselle*

ALL PHOTOGRAPHS IN THIS FEATURE ARE BY SERGE LIDO, OF PARIS.

New Books

Svetlana Beriosova. By A. H. Franks. (*Burke*, 25*s.*)

It is not always easy or advisable for the critic to enjoy more than a passing acquaintance with the artists who are the concern of his work, otherwise a personal element becomes involved which may obscure and bias his judgment. This was Mr. Franks' predicament when he contemplated this biography. I have to admit to a bias for this gifted ballerina, cherished ever since I first saw her and met her backstage at Hammersmith, so am not, perhaps, the best fitted to review his book. But in this expert study of the career of Svetlana Beriosova he has, I feel, tempered his great admiration for his subject with his usual finely critical and knowledgeable judgment. The background of the picture is, perhaps, rather distant, but the growth of an artist who from her earliest days showed all the signs of a rare and splendid talent, and the development of a career which has unfolded surely and inevitably, are painted in detail. The personality behind the dancer is lightly and sympathetically drawn and free of the ponderous, insensitive delvings or embarrassing trivialities that can so easily mar this delicate and difficult side of the biographer's art. The many carefully chosen photographs illustrate and underline the text. Mr. Franks analyses what has been described as Beriosova's remote, dedicated, or even "stand-offish" quality. I think also that one is a little more aware in her of the spiritual isolation of all great artists, the isolation that is, inevitably, a loneliness, but also a retreat and source of strength.

Russian Ballet Master. Ed. Lilian Moore. (*A. & C. Black*, 21*s.*)

The name of Marius Petipa is legendary and historic, reflecting all the glory of the Golden Age of ballet. For fifty years as maître de ballet and choreographer, he reigned supreme at the Maryinsky Theatre; for there was none to equal him. During that time, almost without repeating himself, he composed from his vast wealth of choreographic language some fifty-four ballets and nobody before him or since has invented so many different steps and dances fully expressing the classical technique. He had a large and fabulously brilliant company on which to mount his works and all the money in the Tsar's coffers with which to produce them.

But if you hope to read about it all in these memoirs, and to revel in his recollections of great artists and great occasions, as he knew or experienced them and, above all to gain some insight into his own thoughts and ideas as he composed and rehearsed his famous ballets, then you will be disappointed. For this is a sad book, written by an old and angry man at the end of his days when all the glory had departed. He dwells in some detail on his early career and on his arrival in St. Petersburg, there are some amusing stories and we learn something of the theatrical scene, and manners, in St. Petersburg and Moscow, there is a letter from Tchaikovsky; but the people we long to hear about are little more than names, a perfunctory paragraph deals with the creation of a ballet and a long list of ballets covers the most successful years of his career.

This is because his chief reason for writing these memoirs was to justify himself and his actions and to show how much he had been slighted and persecuted. He considered Teliakovsky, the new director of the Imperial Theatre his arch enemy and accuses him of plotting to bring about the failure of his last ballet and his dismissal. But Teliakovsky bore him no emnity, the truth was that Petipa had outlived his day, failing to keep pace with the times until, at length, there was an outcry against "the antiquated old choregrapher."

There is no doubt the old man must have been extremely difficult and impossible, but at the same time one feels that he received ungrateful and tactless treatment—he was, for instance, refused entry at the stage door of the Maryinsky—and one's heart bleeds for him. "What will they do after my death?" he asks, "Then my name will never appear on the programme." Not so many years, Marius Petipa, one longs to say, and your name will appear on the programme all over the world, wherever ballet is known. Your works will still be the foundation of the ballet repertoire and in it none will receive more love and care in revival than your own great masterpieces!

Miss Lilian Moore has done an admirable work in editing these memoirs, and her very full notes are excellent and indispensable.

Adeline Genée. By Ivor Guest. (*A. & C. Black*, 35*s.*)

English ballet owes an immense debt of gratitude to Dame Adeline Genée.

She was the daughter of a Jutland farmer but was adopted by her uncle Alexander Genée. Both he and his wife were well known dancers, leading their own company, and he had studied under Johansson, Petipa and Nikitin. Adeline showed early talent, and her uncle, determined to make her a great ballerina, became entirely responsible for her training. By the time she was eighteen she had the experience of a much older artist and soon received engagements of importance outside of her uncle's company.

She came to London during the Diamond Jubilee for an engagement at the Empire Theatre, Leicester Square, where ballets were staged with lavish artlessness. She scored an immense success in a ballet called *Monte Cristo* and became the permanent ballerina of the company. Her art was founded on the highest classical tradition and she was a delightful actress as well as a strong technician. Notable in this raffish period was her irreproachable moral standard and she brought new prestige to ballet in London at a time when it was in decline.

Success came so easily to Genée that the story of her life inevitably lacks excitement. Its one great shadow was the death of her husband in 1939. He was an Englishman—a successful company director—and they had been very happily married.

Her success in this country was repeated in American and Australian tours, and she danced and spoke her farewell in 1933 in an early television performance. After that she devoted herself untiringly to furthering the cause of what was to become the Royal Academy of Dancing, creating a standard for teachers and dancers that was non-existent before. She was the first President of the Royal Academy and it was largely through her efforts that it obtained the patronage of Queen Mary and the grant of a Royal Charter.

Ivor Guest recounts the life of Genée with his customary skill and care for detail, and one must be grateful to him for this biography of a great artist. He creates a vivid picture not only of a remarkable career but also of a colourful period that is too often neglected. The book is illustrated with many charming photographs—an amusing "period piece" shows the encounter between Dr. Coppelius and the village lads in which all the latter are en travesti!

The Arts, Artists, & Thinkers. A Symposium edited by John M. Todd. (*Longman, Green*, 35*s.*)

What is the place of the Arts in human life? Art can be a law to itself; how is it compatible with a whole view of life? How can it be explained positively or religiously? A small group of Christians meeting regularly in the West Country attempted to answer questions such as these out of their own experiences and thoughts, and invited a number of artists with Christian beliefs to say how their art fitted into their vision of life. Historians, also, were invited to place the discussion historically; critics, a neurologist and a psycho-therapist gave their assessment of artistic achievement and activity; philosophers and theologians provided an insight into this material. The result was civilized thinking of the highest order, which has been gathered together in this book.

Two well-known figures in the ballet world contributed to the symposium. Arnold Haskell described his reactions as a spectator watching dancing in which the pleasure and experience gained is, at its lowest level, the excitement obtained from brilliant performance of difficult technical feats but at its highest level—and here he cited Ulanova in *Romeo and Juliet* and *Giselle*—is akin to a mystical experience.

Mary Drage, until her marriage soloist with the Royal Ballet, gave an excellent paper on the mind and reactions of the dancer in performance and to a performance, and the tensions and the egocentricity of the artist. Her own particular problem as a dancer, the dichotomy between art and religion, was central to all the discussions. The answer seemed to be found in the final paper by a theologian, a Monk of Downside, Dom Sebastien Moore, a treatise of much learning, power, and spirituality.

Though the two dance contributions only occupy some nineteen of the three hundred and forty-five pages, they are an integral part, and their full value is only obtained by absorbing the whole.

This book is not everyone's cup of tea, and whether you are bored or stimulated by it will depend on your own approach to ballet and the arts generally, and the depth and meaning for you of the pleasure you derive from them. For it deals with eternal truths and mysteries and demands profound thought and concentration. If you are prepared to give this and to go along, you will be greatly enriched and rewarded.

Baron's Ballet Finale. (*Collins*, £2 2*s.*)

Every balletomane will treasure this wonderful collection of photographs, for it includes many of the finest ever taken by Baron and, alas, there will be no more. It was planned in the last year of his life and Arnold Haskell has written his usual illuminating commentary on the photographs and prepared it for the press, but an account of

(*Continued overleaf*)

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—*Observer*

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NEW BOOKS—*Continued*

the career of one who started as an amateur and through his love of the dance became our leading ballet photographer would have been welcome. Baron had a strong personality and this was reflected in all his work, especially in the posed studies—dramatic, original and assured. It was fascinating to watch him trim and correct a photograph. He would run through a batch of new prints with hardly a pause as he dashed a few swift lines on each, so sure was his eye, so strong his feeling for the essential. The earliest pictures in this book were taken before the war—yes, the *Sleeping Beauty* used to look like that!—and the latest in 1956; the years between may be said to survey the development of ballet in Europe and America during that period and include some remarkable pictures of Eastern and Negro ballet. Sometimes they seem to dance right out of the pages. I found Baron a very kindly man and always so helpful—we will all miss him, but the dancers most of all.

The Decca Book of Ballet. Ed. David Drew. (*Muller*, £3 3*s.*)

The Decca Company has put all music and ballet-lovers in its debt by producing so valuable a work of reference. It is a monumental work and something new in ballet literature for it deals with the music of over two hundred ballets, often in detail, sometimes with musical quotations, and describes their action. It is very helpful also to have the complete musical sources as this information is so rarely given in theatre programmes.

The list of contributors is impressive and includes well-known music and ballet critics. Sometimes a composer has been asked to write on the ballet for which he created the music and one notes the names of Gordon Gavin, Richard Arnell, Denis Apivor and Humphrey Searle. All kinds of interesting facts emerge: for instance, I do not think it is generally known that Debussy was violently opposed to Nijinsky's choreography when Diaghilev first produced *L'Apres Midi d'un Faune*. He called it "erotic bestiality, hideous from the front, even more hideous in profile," and walked out at the dress rehearsal after exclaiming "Vous êtes laid! Allez-vous-en!" I am not quite sure though why the writer of the Debussy section, Edward Lockspeiser, should describe the choreography as "disastrous." Nijinsky's work for this ballet has a strange and unique beauty, and though it had a mixed reception, it played to packed houses. Apart from Germany and Austria, *Faune* became a permanent success in the repertoire and provided Diaghilev with that *succes de scandale* in which he so delighted.

Arnold Haskell supplies an excellent outline of the history and development of ballet, there are histories of the major companies and a biographical section dealing with well-known dancers and choreographers and, of course, a discography of all the recordings of ballet music in the Decca catalogue.

In spite of the vast amount of data assembled together, there appear to be remarkably few errors or omissions. *A Blue Rose*, was not first presented in January of last year but on Boxing Day, 1957—a rather important date for it was then that the second company (now the Royal Ballet) appeared for the first time at Covent Garden, and why is the Valse in C Sharp Minor (Op. 64, No. 2) not given in the *Sylphides* section? Also, in some ballets, such as *Giselle*, there is hardly any allusion to the choreography—the first act of this ballet might well be almost entirely mimed—while in others, such as *Prince of the Pagodas*, for instance, each dance and its characteristics are given. But this is carping criticism of a book that has done so many things so well, and its editor, David Drew, is to be congratulated on an excellent job.

Rowena Jackson & Philip Chatfield: Dancers of Today Series. By Cyril Swinson. (*A. & C. Black*, 7*s.* 6*d.*)

The latest addition to this series comes most opportunely for it links together two popular stars in the year of their marriage and their leadership of the Royal Ballet's first Australasian tour.

Rowena Jackson was a scholarship student from New Zealand who first spun into notice as the revolving Blue Girl in *Les Patineurs*. Remarkable for her extraordinary technical facility, hard work and courage have given her in ten years most of the great roles, and as ballerina she now ranks second to Fonteyn. More recently she has developed her powers of interpretation and her most rewarding years should lie ahead.

Philip Chatfield joined the Wells Ballet School at the beginning of the war, travelling up to London from Southampton for two classes a week. Many will remember his first created role, tiny though it was. The long legged little boy took the part of a peasant child in de Valois' *Orpheus* and made it notable for its elevation, its gaiety and assurance. Health problems retarded this early promise but, blessed with perseverance and determination, he has become one of the most stylish and dignified of our danseurs nobles. He is also a mature and sensitive artist with an acting range that extends from Moondog and the Red Knight to Albrecht and Florimund. All this allied to a strong technique makes his future exciting.

PIGEON CROWLE

NEW BOOKS *continued on page* 22.

New Recordings

Reviewed by BEDFORD CROWLE

SEA CHANGE

Nixa's issue, *The Tone Poems of Sibelius*, NCL16023-4, is of very real interest to followers of this composer. As we know, Sir Adrian Boult can be a little dull at times but not in this instance. Here his conducting is, in general, both dramatic and imaginative, and is backed up by fine recording. *En Saga*, which does not come off quite so well as the others, is the music of Cranko's *Sea Change*, put over so effectively by the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet. Also included is the first recording of *The Bard*, which, with some of *The Tempest* music, is part of Gore's *Antonia*. Then there is the beautiful *Swan of Tuonela*, which Eduard Audran choreographed for the equally beautiful Tcherina—and so one goes on from one interesting work to another.

BIRTHDAY OFFERING

This record, HMV. CLP1140, of Glazounov's music to one of Ashton's masterpieces, has been worth waiting for. It should delight every ballet lover, as Ashton's pièce d'occasion is the very essence of ballet in its grandest and most attractive vein. One will never forget that first night when he showed off to individual perfection each of the seven Royal Ballet ballerinas. The reverse side covers excerpts from *Mam'zelle Angot* and both receive an extremely good performance at the hands of Irving and the R.P.O. and a first class recording.

IN MEMORIAM

Nijinska used the *Fantaisie in F minor, Op.* 49 for her ballet, *In Memoriam*, to commemorate the centenary of Chopin's death, which is included with his Op. 22 and 61 and the third *Ballade* in Wilhelm Kempff's piano recital on Decca LXT5445. The *Fantaisie* certainly receives the best interpretation of these works, which are full of poetry and romanticism but in the *Ballade* he does not seem to have given the same thought and consideration as he has to the others.

LES PATINEURS

Decca's new issue, LXT5456, of Martinon conducting the I.P.O., has the same coupling as Irving's, *i.e. Le Cid* ballet music, which it replaces. As one would expect, the recording, of the bright type, is far superior. But, to me, he does not get the same sense of fun and enjoyment from the score, so that I, for one, will hold on to the older record. However he has much more feeling for the ever-popular *Le Cid*.

THE THREE-CORNERED HAT

Eduardo Toldra, a new conductor to our gramophone world, brings a lot of life and zest to this full length, Columbia 33CX1551, and is backed up by a very good recording. It has to compete against Ansermet's re-cut disc, Decca LXT5357, which it does very well. Ansermet's approach is definitely lyrical by comparison and I am not sure that I do not enjoy it more when listening from my armchair, even though it would not give the same inspiration to the dancers on the stage. According to what, individually, you expect, both discs will give satisfaction.

LE RENDEZ-VOUS MANQUÉ

The Sagan ballet has been and gone and with only one regret—that at least two well loved ballet dancers were connected with it. That, however, is no reflection on the well produced little disc, Columbia SED5554, giving excerpts with Michel Magne, the composer, conducting. As music of this genre, it is not bad and you may feel it will widen the scope of your collection.

The Editor of *Ballet Today*.

Dear Madam,

I feel impelled to reply to Mr. Fernau Hall's review of my latest book, *Your Book of Ballet*, in your last issue, for much as I appreciate his kind remarks, he makes two charges that are damaging to a book whose purpose is to instruct.

Mr. Hall says that my division of dancers into four traditional types is inadequate. He also seems to think that I am responsible for a confusing distinction between "The Romantic Period" and "The Classical Ballet," in giving *Giselle* as an example of the former and *Swan Lake* of the latter. Confusion would certainly follow Mr. Hall's distinction, which is the reverse of this.

I would not presume to classify dancers, or stages in the development of ballet. This has been done over the course of years by authorities far greater than I am, and I have taken their ruling as my guide. I could deal at length with what Mr. Hall says, but a ballet book for children of eight to twelve is not the basis for such discourse.

Yours faithfully,
PIGEON CROWLE

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NEW BOOKS—*Contined from page* 20

The Royal Ballet in Performance. By John Hart. (*Faber*, 36*s.*)

This is John Hart's second book and in it he has concentrated on getting shots of the ballets in actual performance. Mr. Hart explains in his introduction the many difficulties which lie in the path of a photographer trying to get away from the usual studio portrait. Naturally, as Ballet Master of the Royal Ballet, he is more concerned with the correct position of head, arms, body, legs and feet, even if it means sacrificing the dramatic content of a picture, and I know from experience that dancers will agree that these are of primary importance. Nevertheless I feel that many exciting photographs are often discarded because of this point of view. However to produce such excellent action shots from eleven ballets in the Royal Ballet repertoire is certainly a great achievement, and the enjoyment of this book is greatly enhanced by the articles on choreographers written by his wife, Margaret Dale, whose own talent as a producer has done so much to improve the presentation of ballet on television.

Miss Dale makes no attempt to glamorise people in their backstage setting, as when writing of Frederick Ashton she recounts that the choreographer gets progressively moodier and depressed as a first night approaches and, quite certain that the whole thing is a hideous failure, shouts irritable instructions from the stalls. There are also intimate pen pictures of Dame Ninette de Valois, John Cranko, Kenneth Macmillan and Alfred Rodrigues, the way they individually approach their work and the ideas they wish to express through their ballets.

The history of each production is given as well as the story of the ballet in words and pictures. There are 214 illustrations well produced on good quality art paper. E. H.

The Royal Ballet To-day. By Cyril Swinson. (*A. & C. Black*, 7*s.* 6*d.*)

This is the third book on the Royal Ballet published during the past few weeks, and I hope as a result would-be authors will be content to leave it at that for the time being.

That is not to say that I do not think this particular book under review does not deserve its own niche in the bookshelf, for it is aimed at a section of the public too often forgotten—the newcomers to ballet.

Here is a record of everything balletomanes want to know. A brief chronology of outstanding events and personalities in the history of the Royal Ballet, the Company, the repertoire, the dancers, the Opera ballet and details of the Lower School at Richmond and the Upper School at Colet Gardens, London.

There are many excellent photographs, well produced on good quality paper, and the book is very good value at its modest publication price. E. H.

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PROGRAMMES FOR THE MONTH

THE ROYAL BALLET AT COVENT GARDEN

20th	Jan.	Tues.	(eve)	*The Sleeping Beauty* (Nerina, Blair, Lindsay)
21st	,,	Wed.	(eve)	*The Sleeping Beauty* (Beriosova, Ashbridge, Linden)
23rd	,,	Fri.	(eve)	*The Sleeping Beauty* (Linden, Blair, Lindsay)
24th	,,	Sat.	(mat)	*Ondine* (Fonteyn, Somes, Farron)
26th	,,	Mon.	(eve)	*Ondine* (Fonteyn, Somes, Farron)
31st	,,	Sat.	(mat)	*Le Lac Des Cygnes* (Linden, Blair, Park)
3rd	Feb.	Tues.	(eve)	*Ondine* (Fonteyn, Somes, Farron)
6th	,,	Fri.	(eve)	*Coppélia* (Nerina, Blair, Hart)
7th	,,	Sat.	(mat)	*Coppélia* (Lane, Grant, White)
7th	,,	Sat.	(eve)	*The Lady and the Fool, La Fête Etrange, Mam'zelle Angot*
9th	,,	Mon.	(eve)	*Ondine* (Fonteyn, Somes)
11th	,,	Wed.	(eve)	*Ondine* (Fonteyn, Somes)
12th	,,	Thur.	(eve)	*Le Lac des Cygnes* (Nerina, Blair)
14th	,,	Sat.	(mat)	*Coppelia* (Park, Burne)
14th	,,	Sat.	(eve)	*Ondine* (Fonteyn, Somes)
18th	,,	Wed.	(eve)	*Mam'zelle Angot, La Fete Etrange, Petrushka*
19th	,,	Fri.	(eve)	*Coppelia* (Linden, Blair)
21st	,,	Sat.	(mat)	*Le Lac des Cygnes* (Beriosova, Ashbridge)
24th	,,	Tues.	(eve)	*Mam'zelle Angot, La Fete Etrange, Petrushka*
25th	,,	Wed.	(eve)	*Le Lac des Cygnes* (Beriosova, Ashbridge)
27th	,,	Fri.	(eve)	*Le Lac des Cygnes* (Linden, Blair)
28th	,,	Sat.	(mat)	*Coppelia* (Park, Burne)

BALLET RAMBERT ON TOUR

W/c 26th Jan.	*Perth Repertory Theatre*
,, 2nd Feb.	*Resume the Scottish Tour* (2 *weeks*)
,, 16th ,,	*Little Theatre, Middlesbrough*
,, 23rd ,,	*Her Majesty's Theatre, Carlisle*
,, 2nd Mar.	*Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton*
,, 9th ,,	*New Theatre, Hull*
,, 16th ,,	*Alhambra Theatre, Bradford*
,, 30th ,,	*Theatre Royal, Exeter*
,, 6th Apr.	*Theatre Royal, Bath*
,, 13th ,,	*Opera House, Cheltenham*
,, 27th ,,	*The White Rock Pavilion, Hastings*

FESTIVAL BALLET ON TOUR

W/c 12th Jan.	*Odeon Theatre, Southend*
,, 19th ,,	*Gaumont Theatre, Ipswich*
,, 26th ,,	*De Montford Hall, Leicester*
,, 9th Feb.	*Hippodrome, Brighton*
,, 16th ,,	*Hippodrome, Golders Green*
,, 23rd ,,	*Davis Theatre, Croydon*
,, 2nd March	*Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-on Avon*
,, 9th ,,	*Empire Theatre, Liverpool*

FESTIVAL BALLET CLUB

Talk by Franklin White on *Mime in Ballet*
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Talk by Keith Beckett on *Comedy in Ballet*
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The Young Dancer's Page

THE FEDERATION OF RUSSIAN CLASSICAL BALLET presented their Evening of Ballet at the Cripplegate Theatre on Saturday November 8th. It was well attended and the governors of the theatre had done all they could to make this company welcome and their work easy. But fate decreed otherwise. Working under more than the usual number of strokes of bad luck, not the least being the piano conking out at the last minute (frantic hunting all over London on a Saturday evening for a piano tuner prepared to come and see to it), by some miracle the show went on *and* dead on time.

While waiting for the curtain to go up I had the pleasure of meeting the organisers of this show. The last thing they wanted was "condescension" to them as amateurs but they do take exception when the same standards are demanded of them as of the professional. I recently read a report of a show I had seen describing it as "a disgrace that it should have been seen in London." Why London should be exempt from a mediocre show any more than any other city I am at a loss to know but that is beside the point. If I saw such a show at a principal London theatre mounted by professionals then I too would consider it disgraceful and in fact I would refuse to sit through it. But this show, and many others like it, are the offering of another section of those people who make up the ballet and, I firmly believe, are equally sincere, so let us treat the amateur with the respect he deserves and give him a fair chance!

What have we the right to expect from the amateur ballet production? First of all, I think, ambition and originality. The amateur can afford the luxury of experiment; the professional must consider the box office. At the show I am reviewing here the only work which showed these qualities to any degree whatsoever was John Gregory's *Seven Dolls in Search of a Ballet*. This he describes as an extended pas de deux with features and this, I'm afraid, is my criticism of it. Maria Balinska's *Surprise Ballet* was very well presented and told very convincingly the story of the wicked Matron of the orphanage exposed by the curiosity of the kind and wealthy Patron's grandson. It was however, altogether too laden with clichés of poetic justice most of which were exhausted with Oliver Twist. The best thing about this ballet was the realistic and suitably Dickensian interpretation of the part of the Matron by Hilary Kearns; a very good piece of acting.

Technically I do not expect such a wide range from the amateur nor the polish of the professional but imperfections are no less inexcusable merely because the dancer does not do it for a living. I do not expect a member of the corps de ballet visited by an itch in her nose to sidle into a corner and scratch it, nor to see older dancers wobble en arabesque nor yet to indulge in irritating mannerisms such as opening and shutting the mouth right through a dance (this last fault occurred in *Consolation*).

One can, I find, expect humour to be well put over by the amateur many of whom seem to have a natural flair for comedy. *Le Petit Ane Blanc* by John Gregory is quite the most delightful new work I have seen for some time. Carole Heaven and Jenny Steward both took umbrage at being the rear half of the donkey (the most appetising carrot being fed to the front half I can't say I blame them!) and finally solved the question by mounting their driver, Angela Brooke. *Make-up Mayketh Woman* by Gabrielle Davis was also enjoyable and disproved the idea embodied in its title quite amusingly. The latter was well-presented comedy, the former well-presented nonsense.

It would not be right to insist on authenticity in national dances but blatant misrepresentations are quite unforgivable since they could always be remedied by a little research beforehand. What I think we have every right to expect of the amateur is that they should honestly and sincerely portray the spirit of the country and the dance brought to the stage and, while dancing, be that country's representative. With the *Bolero* this was not the case. The costumes were a poor imitation of Fanny Elssler and the dancing mere classical ballet out of place; as for the castanet playing, the less said about that the better. But, on the other hand, those who collaborated in presenting the *Divertissement of Character Dances* made every effort to achieve this object. The Portuguese Vira came the nearest to completely making it and I have nothing but praise for John Gregory's Suite of Russian Dances to Balalaika Accompaniment; an adventurous man Mr. Gregory!

During the interval I met Madame Zybina. "I am sorry" she told me "but you will have to see yet again my Croatian Village Scene." Please don't be sorry, Madame Zybina, I thoroughly enjoyed it. Jill Olrod deserves special mention for stepping into the complex Dalmatian Dance at a moment's notice in place of Rosalie Prior who was injured during a rehearsal; this is the luck of the ballet and we hope Rosalie will be fit enough to take the part next time but meanwhile Jill filled the role admirably.

DAVID BENN

NESTA BROOKING SCHOOL—For her two shows on November 8th, Nesta Brooking converted her Hampstead studio into a theatre: one half became a stage (complete with elaborate professional lighting) and the other was built up with rostrums to form an auditorium.

The most striking feature of the programme was the quality and variety of the choreography: each item held the stage with assurance, and the best items were of a quality one rarely sees in the theatre. Maria Fay, just back from composing a ballet for the Ballet der Lage Lande in Holland, contributed three delightful character dances with as finale a Hungarian pillow-dance full of gaiety and joie de vivre. Michael Holmes staged his finest work to date, *Children:* this was composed for two groups, one of small children and one of dancers in their early teens, and he managed to feel himself into the skins of the children of the different age-groups in the most astonishing manner. I liked particularly his reminiscences of *Dark Elegies*, which the children performed with a solemnity and a sense of mission which took one's breath away. Ann Whitley and Amanda Knott were outstanding among the young teenagers, but it was the smallest and youngest of the children—Susan Harwich—who stole the show.

The most ambitious item was the ballet *Papillons*, choreographed by Michael Holmes to music by Schumann. This showed Pierrot bemused by a whole flock of butterflies, dressed in a kaleidoscope of delicate shades of blue, pink and lemon-yellow by Erlund Hudson (a designer of unfailing taste and invention). David Eavis gave the traditional Pierrot attitudes of bewilderment a witty individuality, and Janet Smith danced some fast solos and pas de deux with a fine soubrette brilliance. But the ballet was a shade too long for the material: it needs cutting and tightening up.

Nest Brooking is famous for her work in fostering choreographic talent through her composition classes, and she had the good idea of reviving four of the best ballets composed by her pupils. *La Corrida*, composed by Nicolas Chagrin, represents a child's idea of a bull-fight: footwork very simple, but atmosphere convincing. Mandy Miller's *Dream Fantasy*, previously seen at choreographic competitions, gained a lot from good staging: if she ever gets bored with being a film-star she should return to choreography. The *clou* of the evening was unquestionably Amanda Knott's television ballet *The Story of Little Suck-a-Thumb*, which won a well-deserved ovation. It is usual for stage ballets to be adapted to television: here, for once, was the process in reverse. The ballet survived the translation very well, though I missed the gorgeous final close-up of Amanda's despondent face as the thumbless Conrad.

FERNAU HALL

IMPERIAL SOCIETY OF TEACHERS OF DANCING—CECCHETTI SOCIETY BRANCH—

The annual choreographic competition held by the Cecchetti Society took place on Saturday, 29th November. The Adjudicators were Mr. Cyril Beaumont, Miss Maude Lloyd and Miss Ena Child. There were 31 entries in the Junior Section, of which nine had been chosen for the finals. Dances can be arranged for groups or as solos, and it was a solo entitled *What shall I do for the Choreographic?* by Janice Wright, aged 11, which proved the winner. This ingenious idea enabled the choreographer to show a number of various styles of dance, which she did brilliantly and with a subtle sense of humour. Second place was a tie between a charming dance arrangement for a small group entitled *The Dandelion Clock* by Wendy Bluemel, aged 10, and a more ambitious work for a large group of dancers entitled *Des Espirit D'Orage* by Lillaber Lennox, aged 13. The music prize given by Miss Ena Child was awarded to Irene Bluemel, aged 13, for her composition (based on the style of a fugue) *A Frog He Would a'Fuging Go*. After the outstanding Junior section, the Senior section was a disappointment. The award for music and composition went to Janet Firman, aged 14, for her entry entitled *Torn Memories*. Although there were a few good ideas in this group they were not carried out sufficiently. The high standard of the work, especially in the Junior section must be gratifying to Mr. Beaumont who inaugurated the idea of this composition to encourage the art of choreography.

HELEN ROSS

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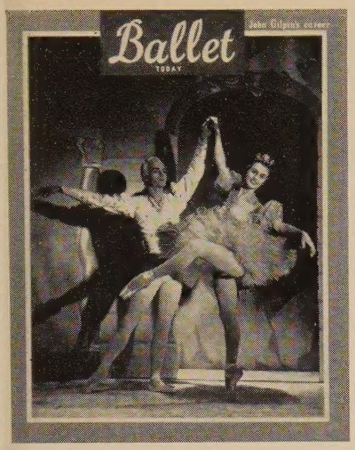

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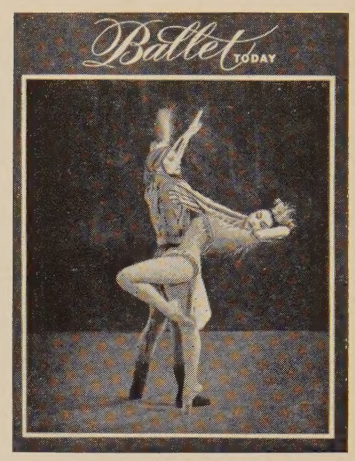

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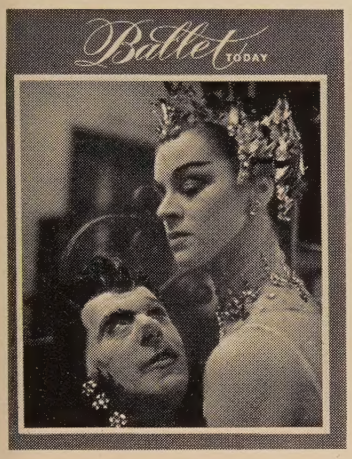

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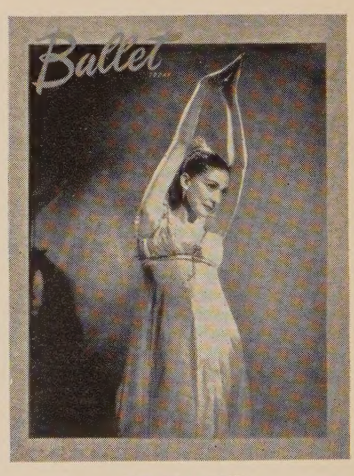

DECEMBER

CAREERS IN PICTURES

JEANNETTE MINTY

IF I was asked to nominate a dancer to be held up to pupils at dancing schools as a golden example of the qualities a dancer needs, I think I would shy away from the obvious genius of Fonteyn or Markova and pick instead one dancer whose progress has not been just the correct application of a boundless natural flair for the medium, but the result of exactly that blend of hard work, determination, cheerfulness and pluck that teachers are perpetually trying to instil.

Jeannette Minty is just such an artist. In the idiom of the "Good Companions" era, she is a "good trouper"; the kind of artist who can, if a star performer falls ill, be relied upon to adequately fill any breach, yet on the ballerina's return will willingly take her place again in the lesser ranks of the company.

Jeannette's fresh, fair, very English good looks are the exact opposite of the soulful Slav type of countenance always cast in ballerina roles by film producers or novelists, and Jeannette found this very much to her advantage when earlier this year she appeared with two members of the Festival Ballet Club on the television show *Tell the Truth.* The panel were baffled as to which was the real ballerina, and the trio of contestants won £50.

Jeannette was born in North London, where she still lives when not on tour. As far back as she can remember she wanted to be a dancer. Indeed, she says that she never really seriously considered any other career. In this ambition her mother was—and is—her chief ally. Mrs. Minty began her scrap book of Jeannette's progress with the first photograph of her daughter in a ballet dress and our picture of the International Ballet period of her career has been borrowed from that album.

Her first dancing lessons were from a local teacher Miss Nowers, and she began serious ballet training at the age of eight. Her education however was at an ordinary school with ballet only as an after school hobby, until the age of 15 when she became a full time student at the Sadler's Wells School.

Among her other teachers have been Nesta Brooking, Ruth French and Goncharov. It was while practising in a class given by the last named that Jeannette tore a cartilage in her knee. An operation for the removal of the damaged tissue followed and for sometime Jeannette had difficulty even in walking. Her doctors warned that she must give up dancing, but with a determination typical of her character she fought her way back to proficiency and the ballet. From the Sadler's Wells School Jeannette went on to the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet. Here she danced a full range of corps de ballet roles, as well as appropriating as her own solo, the Scotch Rhapsody in *Façade.* She also danced the pas de quatre in *Les Rendezvous.* Thus, very early in her career she became associated with the lighter type of role and has very wisely decided to specialize in those characterizations which best suit her gay soubrette stage personality. Her favourite roles with Festival Ballet are the Fairy in *Nutcracker* and Swanilda in *Coppelia,* and she says that it is her ambition to dance even better in these roles rather than make an attempt at more dramatic items such as *Giselle.* Incidentally Fairy roles have a way of catching up with Jeannette wherever she goes for, at seventeen, she was a pantomime Fairy Godmother. The job was a "filler" and Jeannette confesses that now she can't even remember the name of the pantomime, only that it was great fun for a change.

At nineteen Jeannette found herself dancing Bluebird with the International Ballet's production of *Sleeping Princess.* Her partner in this role was Denys Palmer. It was while she was with the International Ballet that she first met her husband Peter White, now a fellow member of Festival Ballet.

Mr. and Mrs. White share many off-duty interests the foremost amongst them being photography and home decorating. It was in fact Peter White who took the photograph we show of Jeannette Minty's first night as an official ballerina. They do most of their own developing and printing and in addition to still photography, they are, like many members of Festival Ballet, cine enthusiasts and use their cameras to record many of the unusual places they visit in the course of their work.

Touring with ballet companies has already taken Jeannette Minty at least half way round the world and high on the list of places she would like to visit again are the United States and Spain.

Whenever she gets the opportunity Jeannette likes to spend a busman's holiday at the theatre. Like most dancers she feels that she, as a trained artist, is not able to get the pleasure from ballet performances

Continued at foot of next column

PHOTOGRAPHS:

Opposite page: *As Baroness Popoff in* Vilia. *Photo Rimis Ltd. With the International Ballet, as the Virgin, with Denys Palmer in* Visions.

This page: *As the Sugar Plum Fairy in* Nutcracker *with Louis Godfrey. Photo: Hamilton Walter.*

Jeannette's first night as ballerina at the Festival Hall (with Louis Godfrey). This photograph was taken by Jeannette's husband Peter White.

that a layman would because she cannot help noticing technical flaws. However as regards other types of entertainment her taste is a catholic one. Musical or murder, classic or comedy she likes them all. If she has any preference it is for the opera, a taste formed in her student days when she was an inveterate galleryite.

A person who puts musicality among the first requirements of a dancer, she also enjoys concerts and herself plays the piano.

Asked what she regarded as the highlight of her career to date, she replied, in Germany in 1957 when on tour at a moment's notice she was asked to replace Belinda Wright who had fallen ill. After the performance (*Nutcracker*), Dr. Braunsweg sent for her and told her on the strength of that showing she was to be officially listed as one of the company's ballerinas, a billing to take effect in the summer season in London.

Her most embarrassing moment in the theatre was equally easy to remember, this occurred when she was dancing the Fiancée to Oleg Briansky's Hussar in *Beau Danube*, and he failed to appear for his entrance. Jeannette was left to complete the pas de deux alone, until suddenly realising her plight, Petrus Bosman stepped forward from the corps de ballet and helped her with the lifts.

For the future her ambition is uncomplicated, to go on dancing as long and as well as possible. And that future seems full of promise for Jeannette has been suggested as one of the leads in the new Noel Coward ballet which the Company is to première in London during their usual summer season at the Royal Festival Hall.

Text by **SONIA ROBERTS**

ROLES DANCED

For Sadler's Wells Ballet

Scotch Rhapsody in *Façade*
Pas de quatre in *Les Rendezvous*

For the International Ballet

Flower seller in *Gaîté Parisienne*

Bluebird and Fairy in *Sleeping Princess*

The Virgin in *Visions*

For Festival Ballet

Baroness Popoff in *Vilia*

Ballerina in *Petrouchka*

Mechanical Doll and Sugar Plum Fairy in *Nutcracker*

Dormouse in *Alice in Wonderland*

Fiancée in *Beau Danube*

Swanhilda in *Coppelia*

Leading role in *Symphony for Fun*

Leading role in *Grieg Concerto*

Fanny Cerrito in *Pas de Quatre*

Lead in *Concerto Grosso*

Mistress of Ceremonies in *Graduation Ball*

Octetto (The new Paddy Stone Ballet)

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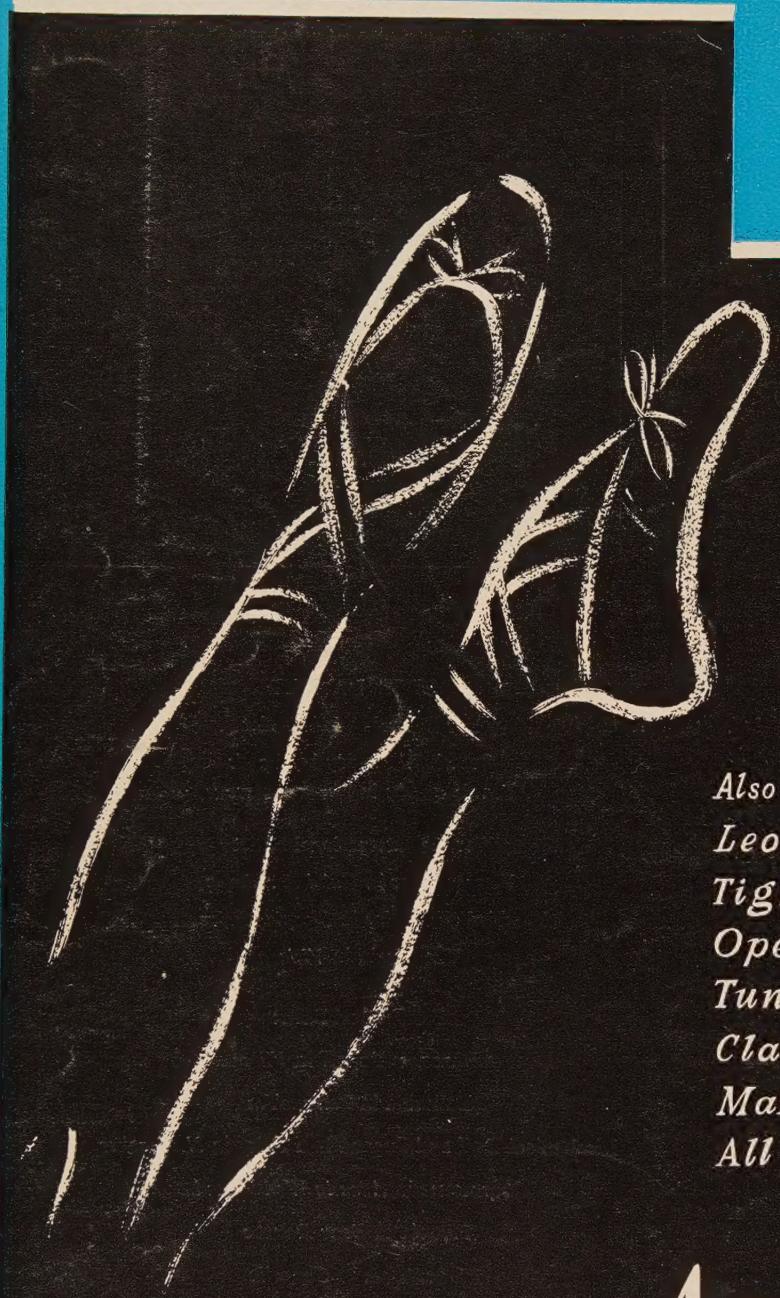

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